

DGuzik 42 Luke

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(Luk 1:1)

Explanatory Preface

Now¹ many have undertaken to compile an account² of the things³ that have been fulfilled⁴ among us, (Guzik)

Luk 1:1-80

Luke 1 - THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

A. Introduction to the Gospel of Luke.

1. About the author, Luke the physician.

a. Luke was a companion of Paul (Act₁₆:10-11; 2Ti₄:11; Phm₁:24) and Paul called him the *beloved physician* (Col₄:14). Because Luke was a doctor, he was a man of science and research, and this is reflected in his history of the life of Jesus.

b. By every indication, Luke was a Gentile. Col₄:10-11 and Col₄:14 show that he wasn't Jewish, because he is not included in the group *who are of the circumcision*. This makes Luke unique in that he is the only New Testament writer who was a Gentile.

c. God gave this lone Gentile writer a great privilege. Because he also wrote the book of Acts (which makes up the second volume of this Gospel), Luke wrote more of the New Testament than any other human writer did.

2. Features of the Gospel of Luke.

a. Luke is the most *comprehensive* gospel. He documents the story of Jesus' all the way from the annunciation of John the Baptist to Jesus' ascension.

b. Luke is the most *universal* gospel. In Luke, Gentiles are often put in a favorable light.

c. Luke's gospel is the one most interested in the roles of *women, children, and social outcasts*.

d. The gospel of Luke is the one most interested in *prayer*. He has seven different references to Jesus praying that are found in this gospel alone.

e. Luke's gospel is the one with the most emphasis on the *Holy Spirit* and on *joy*.

f. Luke's gospel is the one with the most emphasis on preaching the good news (the *gospel*). This term is used ten times in this Gospel (and only once in any other Gospel) as well as fifteen additional times in Acts.

3. (Luk_1:1-4) Luke's introduction to his Gospel.

Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

a. **Many have taken in hand:** Luke writes his gospel with the full knowledge that many have *already* written histories of the life of Jesus. This may be a reference to the works of Mark and Matthew (most people think John was written *after* Luke), and it may also refer to other biographies of Jesus not directly inspired by the Holy Spirit.

i. Many "scholars" have claimed that the writings about Jesus did not come about until two or perhaps three generations after His death on the cross. But recent (as of December, 1994) findings by German papyrus expert Carsten Thiede suggest that we may actually possess copies of Matthew that date close to the very time of Jesus.

Thiede's findings are based on a careful analysis of the handwriting script used on the fragment.

b. Luke writes about **those things which are most surely believed among us**. He is writing about things already commonly *known* and **believed** among Christians. When Luke wrote, most Christians already knew all about the life of

Jesus, both from the oral accounts passed on by the original disciples, and by the biographies that had already been written.

c. **Just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us:** Luke tells us that he received his material for this book as any reliable historian would, from **eyewitnesses**.

i. **Those who from the beginning** are undoubtedly the apostles, who were with Jesus from the very start. But **those who from the beginning** would also include people such as Mary herself, whom Luke probably “interviewed” in his research for this history of the life of Jesus.

ii. Luke wrote to a first century world that was burnt out on “if it feels good, do it” living; yet it was offended by the crazy superstitions of most religions. The world then, as today, longs for what Christianity offers: *faith* founded on *fact*.

d. **Most excellent Theophilus:** Luke addresses his gospel to a man named **Theophilus**, but it was also written with a wider audience in mind.

i. By his title (**most excellent**), we gather that Theophilus was probably a Roman government official. It is entirely likely that the books of Luke and Acts make up Paul’s defense brief for his trial before Caesar, since Acts leaves Paul waiting for that trial.

ii. Whoever Theophilus was, he had already had some instruction in the faith (**in which you were instructed**).

e. The first four verses are one sentence in the original Greek. They are written in refined, academic, classical style. But then, for the rest of the gospel, Luke doesn’t use the language of scholars but of the common man, the language of the village and the street. Luke is saying to us, “This account has all the proper academic and scholarly credentials. But it is written for the man on the street.” Luke

wrote so that people would understand Jesus, not so they would admire his brain and literary skill.

B. The announcement of the birth of John the Baptist.

1. (Luk_1:5-7) The time and people beginning the history of the life of Jesus.

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

a. These first events happened in a certain time: **in the days of Herod**. This is the man known as *Herod the Great*, who was at the end of a long and terrible reign. Ethnically, he was not a descendant of Israel, but of Jacob's brother Esau - and Edomite, or an Idumean. He was known for his spectacular building programs, but even more so for his paranoid cruelty, which drove him to execute many, including members of his own family.

b. These first events happened to certain people: to **Zacharias** and **Elizabeth**, who were righteous and obedient, yet stigmatized with barrenness (**but they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren**).

c. **Of the division of Abijah**: Priestly divisions (including the **division of Abijah**) are noted in 1 Chronicles 23-24.

2. (Luk_1:8-10) Zacharias' temple service.

So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

a. **According to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense**: Only priests from a particular lineage could serve in the temple. Over the years the number of priests multiplied, (there were said to be as many as 20,000

priests in the time of Jesus) so they had to use the **lot** to determine which priests would serve when. The **lot** to serve in the time might fall to a priest only once in his life.

i. To a godly man like Zacharias, this would be the biggest event of his life, a tremendous privilege, a-once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Surely, Zacharias must have wondered what it would be like to enter the holy place. And he must have wondered if God has something special to communicate to him in that special event of his life.

ii. It is also easy to imagine Zacharias asking the other priests who had already burned incense before the Lord what it was like; asking them if they had any unique spiritual experience when they were ministering before the Lord. This whole event was filled with enormous anticipation.

b. **To burn incense:** According to the Law of Moses, incense was offered to God on the golden altar every morning and every evening (Exo_30:7-8). By this time, there was an established ritual for the practice.

i. There were several lots cast to determine who did what at the morning sacrifice. The first lot determined who would cleanse the altar and prepare its fire; the second lot determined who would kill the morning sacrifice and sprinkle the altar, the golden candlestick, and the altar of incense. The third lot determined who would come and offer incense. This was the most privileged duty; those who received the first and second lots would repeat their duty at the evening sacrifice, but not with the third lot. To offer the incense would be a once in a lifetime opportunity.

ii. Before dawn, hundreds of worshippers gathered at the temple. The morning sacrifice began when the incense priest walked toward the temple, through the outer courts, he struck a gong-like instrument known as the *Magrephah*. At this sound, the Levites assembled and got ready to lead the gathered people in songs of worship to God.

iii. The other two priests chosen by lot that morning walked up to the temple on each side of the priest chosen to offer

the incense. All three entered the holy place together. One priest set burning coals on the golden altar; the other priest arranged the incense so it was ready to go. Then those two priests left the temple, and the incense priest was left all alone in the holy place.

iv. In front of him was the golden altar of incense; it was 18 inches square and 3 feet high. On that small table lay the burning coals, with little wisps of smoke rising up, ready for the incense. Behind the gold altar was a huge, thick curtain, and behind that curtain was the Holy of Holies, the Most Holy Place, where no man could enter, except the high priest, and that only on the Day of Atonement. As he faced the golden altar of incense, to his right would be the table of showbread, and to his left would be the golden lampstand, which provided the only light for the holy place.

c. And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense: When the people outside saw the two men exit the temple, they knew that the time to offer the incense had come. Those hundreds of people bowed or kneeled before the Lord, and spread their hands out in silent prayer. They knew that at that moment the incense priest prayed in the holy place, in the very presence of God, for the entire nation.

i. There followed several minutes of dead silence in all the temple precincts - as Zacharias lingered in prayer in the holy place during this, the most solemn experience of his life.

ii. The connection between the burning of **incense** and prayer might seem strange to some, but in the Bible the burning of incense is a strong picture of prayer (Psa_141:2; Rev_5:8).

ii. What did Zacharias pray for? He must have thought about it carefully beforehand. He may have even taken out a prayer list, though it is more likely he memorized it. He also knew how long to pray, because he had attended the morning sacrifice as a worshipper many times before, and he knew how long the incense priest stayed in the temple. He

must have prayed for both needs of the nation of Israel, which was occupied and oppressed by the hated Romans. He must have prayed for God to send the Messiah. He probably would have thought it wrong to throw in his personal needs at such a holy moment!

3. (Luk_1:11-17) The angel's announcement to Zacharias.

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. "And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

a. **Then an angel of the Lord appeared:** The angel simply stood **on the right side of the altar of incense**.

Zacharias probably had his eyes tightly shut in passionate prayer, and when he opened them he saw this angel.

b. **When Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him:** No wonder why! The **angel** who appeared to Zacharias was not a romantic figure, or a naked baby with wings. This angel was a glorious, fearful, and an awesome creature. Like most angels in the Bible, the first thing this angel has to say to his human contact is **"Do not be afraid."**

i. Zacharias must have thought, "Does this happen to everyone who does this? The other guys didn't tell me anything about this!"

c. Your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear a son:

It is very doubtful that Zacharias prayed for a son when he was at the golden altar of incense. First, it might have seemed like such a “selfish” need. Second, since he and Elizabeth *were both well advanced in years* (Luk_1:7), they had probably given up on this prayer a long time ago.

i. Sometime we pray for something for a long, long time. We pray for the salvation of a spouse or a child. We pray for a calling or a ministry. We pray that God would bring that special person to us. But after years of heartfelt prayer, we give up out of discouragement. Zacharias and Elizabeth probably prayed years of passionate prayer for a son, but gave up a long time ago, and stopped believing God for so much anymore.

ii. When we are in that place, we sometimes begin - in the smallest of ways - to doubt the love and care of God for us. But God always loves, and His care never stops.

iii. Zacharias’ reaction to the angel’s promise was probably thinking, “I don’t know what you are talking about. I didn’t pray for a son. We’re old, you know. I gave up on that prayer a long time ago. I’m praying for the salvation of Israel. I’m praying that God will send the promised Messiah.” Zacharias didn’t know that God would answer both prayers at once, and use his miracle baby to be a part of sending the Messiah!

iv. Zacharias had no idea that God would answer the two greatest desires of his heart at once. He had probably completely given up on the idea of being a dad; it was a hope that was crushed over the years of disappointment.

But God hadn’t given up on it, even though Zacharias and Elizabeth had.

d. You shall call his name John: The boy was given a name before he was even conceived. This was a command from the Lord to name the boy **John**.

e. His son John would be **great in the sight of the Lord**, and would **drink neither wine nor strong drink**, a probable reference to the vow of a Nazirite found in Numbers 6. John would be specially consecrated to God all the days of his life, as Samson *should* have been.

i. Though John would be **great in the sight of the Lord** , by the grace of God, *he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he* (Mat_11:11).

f. Most importantly, John would have a unique filling of the Holy Spirit - being **filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb**.

i. Calvin, on John being filled with the Holy Spirit from the womb: "Let us learn by this example that, from the earliest infancy to the latest old age, the operation of the Spirit in men is free."

g. His ministry would be to **turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God**. He would prepare the way of the Messiah by turning hearts to God before the Messiah came. The pattern for his ministry would be the great prophet Elijah - **will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah**. Jesus later said this was fulfilled in John (Mat_11:14

and Mat_17:12).

h. **To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children:**

This quotation from Mal_4:5-6 is meaningful for more than its reference to Elijah. These were essentially the last words in the Old Testament, and now God's revelation is resuming where it had left off.

i. Elijah was a man who called Israel to a radical repentance (1Ki_18:20-40).

4. (Luk_1:18-20) Zacharias' doubt and muteness.

And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be

mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

a. **How shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is well advanced in years:** Zacharias’ attitude was, “Thanks for the promise, angel. But knowing the condition of my wife and I, this is a big one. Can you give us a sign to prove it?”

i. It isn’t that Zacharias doesn’t *want* to believe this; he does. It is simply that he feels it must be too good to be true, and he has probably protected himself from disappointment by not setting his expectations too high. We rob ourselves of many a miracle by the same attitude.

ii. Zacharias looked at the circumstances first, and what God can do last; we are tempted to think this is logical; but if God is real, there is nothing logical about putting circumstances before God.

b. **I am Gabriel who stands in the presence of God:** Gabriel reminds Zacharias of who *he is* and where he has come from. There is a big contrast between **I am an old man** and **I am Gabriel** - which held more weight? Gabriel also “preaches the gospel” to Zacharias (**brings you glad tidings**).

i. It was nothing but good news to Zacharias that he would not only have a son, but that the son would have a significant role in God’s plan of redemption. This is the good news that Gabriel brought to Zacharias.

ii. This gives a better idea of what it really means to preach to gospel - it is to bring good news to people who need it.

c. If there is no Zacharias, there is no John the Baptist. If there is no John the Baptist, there is no herald announcing the coming of the Messiah. If there is no herald announcing the coming of the Messiah, the prophecies in the Old Testament regarding the Messiah are unfulfilled. If any of the prophecies of the Old Testament regarding the first coming of the Messiah are unfulfilled, then Jesus did not fulfill all

things. If Jesus did not fulfill all things, then He did not complete God's plan of redemption for you and I and we must perish in our sins! This *was* good news!

d. **But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak:** Zacharias paid a price for his unbelief. His unbelief did not make God take his promise back; it just kept Zacharias from enjoying it.

i. When we do not believe God's promise for our lives, we do not necessarily destroy the promise; but we do destroy our ability to enjoy the promise. What made this such a severe punishment was that Zacharias had such great news to tell.

ii. Strangely, many Christians would not consider this a punishment - they don't mind keeping quiet about the good news of Jesus.

5. (Luk_1:21-23) Zacharias appears to the multitude.

And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. And so it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house.

a. **And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long:** The custom was for the priest to come from the temple as soon as he was finished praying, to assure the people that he had not been struck dead by God. Zacharias' delay had started to make the crowd nervous.

i. After the incense priest finished, he came out of the holy place through the great doors of the temple, and met the other two priests right outside the doors. Then the incense priest raised his hands and blessed the people with the blessing from Num_6:24-26. The hundreds of gathered worshippers knew what to do; they responded by saying, "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting."

ii. After all this, the Levites got the “praise band” started. They began with a blast from special silver trumpets; then a priest struck the cymbals, and the choir of Levites began to sing the Psalm of the day. The choir was made up of not less than twelve voices, which mingled young and old for a full range of sound and probably some great harmonies.

b. **But when he came out, he could not speak to them:** When Zacharias came out, he was supposed to stand on the temple steps, overlooking the crowd, and pronounce the priestly blessing on the people (Num_6:24-26), and the other priests would repeat it after him. But Zacharias couldn’t speak!

i. Doing the best he could through hand motions, he told the story of what happened to him in the temple. It’s hard to know if everyone believed him!

6. (Luk_1:24-25) Elizabeth’s conception and joy.

Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among people.”

a. **His wife Elizabeth conceived:** Zacharias had normal relations with his wife; he partnered with God to fulfill the promise. He did not count on this child coming from a miraculous conception.

b. **She hid herself five months:** Why did Elizabeth go away? Not to hide her pregnancy; she was gone for the first five months, the time when she would be least noticed as pregnant. She went away to spend time with the Lord, and to meditate on the destiny of the child within her.

C. The announcement of the birth of Jesus.

1. (Luk_1:26-27) Gabriel is sent to Mary in **Nazareth**.

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name *was* Mary.

a. **Nazareth** was a village seventy miles northeast of Jerusalem. It was a tough town, a known for its corruption and low morals.

b. Mary is said to be **betrothed** to Joseph. There were three stages to a Jewish wedding in that day: *engagement* (a formal agreement made by the fathers), *betrothal* (the ceremony where mutual promises are made), and *marriage* (approximately one year later when the bridegroom comes at an unexpected time for his bride).

i. When a couple was **betrothed**, they were under the obligations of faithfulness, and a divorce was required to break the betrothal. This was not a casual promise.

c. **To a virgin betrothed . . . the virgin's name was Mary**: Mary is also said to be a **virgin**. There is no ambiguity about the idea here - Mary had never had sexual relations with any man.

d. If the conception of John the Baptist, the forerunner, was miraculous, how much more should we expect the conception of the Messiah to be miraculous?

2. (Luk_1:28-33) Gabriel's announcement to Mary.

And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!" But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

a. **The angel said to her**: Gabriel has three things to say to Mary. First, that she is **highly favored**. Second, that the **Lord is with** her. Third, that she is **blessed**. All this was certainly true of Mary, who has a unique privilege among any person to ever live.

i. However, all these things are true of the believer in Jesus. We are highly favored as Mary was (Eph_1:6), the Lord is with us (Mat_28:20), and we are blessed (Eph_1:3).

ii. The Roman Catholic prayer that begins “Hail Mary, full of grace” is accurate. Mary *was* full of grace, and so is the believer. But Mary’s grace was a *received* grace, not grace to bestow to others.

b. **But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying:** The fact that Mary is **troubled at his saying** shows her humility. Mary was surprised to hear such extravagant words used of her. Truly godly people don’t go around thinking about how godly they are!

c. **And bring forth a Son:** The focus is not on Mary, but on **a Son**, to be named **JESUS**, which was a common name. This **Son** is unmistakably identified as the Messiah predicted by the Old Testament.

i. **He will be great:** has anyone influenced history more than Jesus Christ has?

ii. He **will be called the Son of the Highest:** Jesus would be the son of Mary, but not only her son; He would also be, and be known as, the Son of God.

iii. **The throne of His father David:** He will be the Messiah prophesied to David (2Sa_7:12-16), who has the rightful authority to rule over Israel, **and of His kingdom there will be no end.**

d. Mary knew exactly what Gabriel was talking about because she was a woman of the word of God. When he said **you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son**, she knew he quoted from Isa_7:14 : *the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son.*

3. (Luk_1:34-37) Mary’s question and Gabriel’s response.

Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” And the angel answered and said to her, “*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.* Now indeed, Elizabeth

your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.”

a. **How can this be, since I do not know a man?** Mary’s question is logical. She asks basically the same question Zacharias asked (Luk_1:18), but his question was asked in skeptical unbelief, her question was asked in wonder-filled faith.

b. **The power of the Highest will overshadow you:** Gabriel answered that **the power of the Highest**, in the Person of the **Holy Spirit**, would **overshadow** Mary. The word **overshadow** means “to cover with a cloud,” like the cloud of Shekinah glory (Exo_16:10; Exo_19:9; Exo_24:16; Exo_34:5; Exo_40:34) or the cloud of transfiguration (Mat_17:5, Mar_9:7, Luk_9:34).

i. This cloud is a visible manifestation of the glory and presence of God; this means that the same power of God that was with Moses and others in the Old Testament is now going to do a unique work in the life of Mary.

ii. “This delicate expression rules out crude ideas of a ‘mating’ of the Holy Spirit with Mary.” (Morris)

c. **That Holy One who is to be born:** Because this will be the manner of His conception, He is a **Holy One** (different from all others), and He **will be called the Son of God**.

i. This doesn’t have the same impact on us today, when many people claims to be a “son of god.” But Mary (and all other Jewish people from her culture) knew what this meant: this child would be equal to God (Joh_5:18).

ii. Jesus did not *become* the Son of God; He was **called the Son of God**, recognizing His nature from all eternity.

d. **Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age:** With such an amazing promise, Gabriel also brings evidence - Elizabeth is pregnant. If God can do that, He can do what He promised for Mary.

i. “Though believers are satisfied with the bare word of God, yet they do not disregard any of his works which they find to be conducive to strengthen their faith.” (Calvin)

e. **With God nothing shall be impossible:** The point is clear. More literally, one could translate this *for no word of God shall be powerless*. God will absolutely perform what He has said.

4. (Luk_1:38) Mary’s response of faith.

Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

a. **Behold, the maidservant of the Lord!** Mary first responds by agreeing with what Gabriel has said about her. She *is* **the maidservant of the Lord**, and it isn’t her position to debate with her Master, but to accept what He says.

b. **Let it be to me according to your word:** Mary then responds with an affirmation of faith. **Let it be to me according to Your word** is the proper response of every believer.

i. All this took more trust in the Lord than we might think. Mary agrees to receive a pregnancy that will be seen as suspicious, and this in a culture that had a death penalty for adultery. Mary identified herself with sinners so that the purpose of God would be fulfilled.

c. **And the angel departed from her:** We don’t know the exact moment Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary. It may have been when Gabriel spoke to her, or soon after. Whenever it was, Mary was *overshadowed* by the cloud of God’s glory (Luk_1:35), and Jesus was miraculously conceived in Mary’s womb. Jesus’ birth from this conception is what we call the *Virgin Birth*.

i. When we approach the Virgin Birth, we have to agree with Paul’s analysis: *great is the mystery of godliness* (1Ti_3:16). But the message of the Scriptures is clear regarding the

Virgin Birth. There can be no question about the Virgin Birth, only questions about the authority of Scripture.

ii. The Virgin Birth is unique. Many mythologies have legends about a god who has sexual relations with a woman and produces offspring, but the idea of a *virgin birth* is unique to Christianity.

D. Mary's song.

1. (Luk_1:39-45) Mary's visit to Elizabeth.

Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb! But why *is* this *granted* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed *is* she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

a. **The babe leaped in her womb:** When Elizabeth saw Mary, her unborn child - John the Baptist - **leaped**, because he was filled with **joy**. Though John wasn't born yet, he had a spiritual awareness and could respond to the Spirit of God.

b. **Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!** John the Baptist had not yet been born, and Zacharias was still mute. Yet Elizabeth *believes* the word of the Lord given to her husband Zacharias when he was in the temple. In the temple, Gabriel told him that their promised son would *make ready a people prepared for the Lord* (Luk_1:17). Elizabeth believed it, and believed that the baby in Mary's womb was the *Lord* who Elizabeth's son would prepare the way for (**the mother of my Lord**). This faith was in Elizabeth because she **was filled with the Holy Spirit**.

c. **Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things:** Elizabeth recognized that Mary's faith played an active role in receiving the promise. God promises should never make us passive; they should prompt us to seize them by faith. Elizabeth wanted to encourage Mary's faith, so she declared "**there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.**"

2. (Luk_1:46-56) Mary's song of praise to the Lord.

And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy *is* His name. And His mercy *is* on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered *the* proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from *their* thrones, and exalted *the* lowly. He has filled *the* hungry with good things, and *the* rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of *His* mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever." And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

a. **My soul magnifies the Lord:** This song (often called *the Magnificent*, after the Latin translation of the first few words) resembles Hannah's song in 1Sa_2:1-10, but it also has at least 12 other allusions to the Old Testament. This means that Mary was a woman who drank deeply of God's Word. It was on her heart, and comes out through her song.

b. This song mainly celebrates God's goodness, faithfulness, and power. Mary's song shows the futility of trusting in yourself, trusting in political power, or trusting in riches. Mary's trust has been in God, and it has been rewarded.

c. **My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior:** This means Mary needed a **Savior**, and she *knew* she needed a **Savior**.

“Mary answered the Roman Catholic dogma of the immaculate conception, which holds that from the moment of her conception Mary was by God’s grace ‘kept free from all taint of Original Sin.’ Only sinners need a Savior.” (Liefeld) E. John the Baptist’s birth.

1. (Luk_1:57-66) The birth and naming of John the Baptist.

Now Elizabeth’s full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her. So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. His mother answered and said, “No; he shall be called John.”

But they said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name.” So they made signs to his father; what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, “His name is John.” So they all marveled.

Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue *loosed*, and he spoke, praising God. Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard *them* kept *them* in their hearts, saying, “What kind of child will this be?” And the hand of the Lord was with him.

a. **She brought forth a son:** The promise was fulfilled just as God said it would be. God always keeps His promises.

b. **They would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias:** Both Zacharias and Elizabeth knew the name of the child had to be John, according to the command from the angel (Luk_1:13).

c. **They made signs to his father:** They treated Zacharias as if he were deaf, not mute! This must have been constantly annoying to Zacharias.

d. **His name is John:** Now, Zacharias responds in total faith. It isn’t “I think his name should be John.” For Zacharias, this was recognition of a fact, not a suggestion.

i. Even though he had failed before, God gave Zacharias a *second chance* at faith. He gives the same to us today.

e. **Immediately his mouth was opened:** Just as Gabriel said, Zacharias can speak again. **He spoke, praising God.** It is fitting that Zacharias' first words were praise to God. His chastisement for disobedience hasn't made him bitter. It's made him want to trust God all the more, at every opportunity.

2. (Luk_1:67-80) Zacharias' prophecy.

Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: "Blessed *is* the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who *have been* since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham: To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

a. The prophetic voice of the Lord had been silent for 400 years; it is no small thing to read **Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied** - and he now proclaims the salvation of the Messiah and His forerunner.

i. Zacharias' song has been called the *Benedictus*, from its first words in the Latin translation.

b. Has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David: We know this is truly Spirit-inspired prophecy because the focus of his prophecy is the unborn Jesus, not Zacharias' new son John.

i. Zacharias doesn't even *know* Jesus yet, but he praises Him, he loves Him, and he is passionate about Jesus. We know so much more about Jesus than Zacharias does, so what can excuse the coldness of our hearts?

c. The child grew and became strong in spirit: The promise of God came to fruition in John's life. Why was John **in the desert till the day of his manifestation?** Because that is where God has trained many of His prophets. (Luk 1:2) like the accounts⁵ passed on⁶ to us by those who were eyewitnesses and servants of the word⁷ from the beginning.⁸

(Luk 1:3) So⁹ it seemed good to me as well,¹⁰ because I have followed¹¹ all things carefully from the beginning, to write an orderly account¹² for you, most excellent Theophilus, (Luk 1:4) so that you may know for certain¹³ the things you were taught.¹⁴

(Luk 1:5) ***Birth Announcement of John the Baptist***

During the reign¹⁵ of Herod¹⁶ king of Judea, there lived a priest named Zechariah who belonged to¹⁷ the priestly division of Abijah,¹⁸ and he had a wife named Elizabeth,¹⁹ who was a descendant of Aaron.²⁰

(Luk 1:6) They²¹ were both righteous in the sight of God, following²² all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly.²³

(Luk 1:7) But they did not have a child, because Elizabeth was barren,²⁴ and they were both very old.²⁵

(Luk 1:8) Now²⁶ while Zechariah²⁷ was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty,²⁸

(Luk 1:9) he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood,²⁹ to enter³⁰ the holy place³¹ of the Lord and burn incense.

(Luk 1:10) Now³² the whole crowd³³ of people were praying outside at the hour of the incense offering.³⁴

(Luk 1:11) An³⁵ angel of the Lord,³⁶ standing on the right side of the altar of incense, appeared³⁷ to him.

(Luk 1:12) And Zechariah, visibly shaken when he saw the angel,³⁸ was seized with fear.³⁹

(Luk 1:13) But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard,⁴⁰ and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son; you⁴¹ will name him John.⁴²

(Luk 1:14) Joy and gladness will come⁴³ to you, and many will rejoice at⁴⁴ his birth,⁴⁵

(Luk 1:15) for he will be great in the sight of⁴⁶ the Lord. He⁴⁷ must never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth.⁴⁸

(Luk 1:16) He⁴⁹ will turn⁵⁰ many of the people⁵¹ of Israel to the Lord their God.

(Luk 1:17) And he will go as forerunner before the Lord⁵² in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,⁵³ to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him."

(Luk 1:18) Zechariah⁵⁴ said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this?⁵⁵ For I am an old man, and my wife is old as well."⁵⁶

(Luk 1:19) The⁵⁷ angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands⁵⁸ in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring⁵⁹ you this good news.

(Luk 1:20) And now,⁶⁰ because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time,⁶¹ you will be silent, unable to speak,⁶² until the day these things take place."

(Luk 1:21) Now⁶³ the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they began to wonder⁶⁴ why he was delayed in the holy place.⁶⁵

(Luk 1:22) When⁶⁶ he came out, he was not able to speak to them. They⁶⁷ realized that he had seen a vision⁶⁸ in the holy place,⁶⁹

because⁷⁰ he was making signs to them and remained unable to speak.⁷¹

(Luk 1:23) When his time of service was over,⁷² he went to his home.

(Luk 1:24) After some time⁷³ his wife Elizabeth became pregnant,⁷⁴ and for five months she kept herself in seclusion.⁷⁵ She said,⁷⁶

(Luk 1:25) "This is what⁷⁷ the Lord has done for me at the time⁷⁸ when he has been gracious to me,⁷⁹ to take away my disgrace⁸⁰

among people."⁸¹

(Luk 1:26) ***Birth Announcement of Jesus the Messiah***

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy,⁸² the angel Gabriel⁸³ was sent by⁸⁴ God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth,⁸⁵

(Luk 1:27) to a virgin engaged⁸⁶ to a man whose name was Joseph, a descendant of David,⁸⁷ and the virgin's name was Mary.

(Luk 1:28) The⁸⁸ angel⁸⁹ came⁹⁰ to her and said, "Greetings, favored one,⁹¹ the Lord is with you!"⁹²

(Luk 1:29) But⁹³ she was greatly troubled⁹⁴ by his words and began to wonder about the meaning of this greeting.⁹⁵

(Luk 1:30) So⁹⁶ the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid,⁹⁷ Mary, for you have found favor⁹⁸ with God!

(Luk 1:31) Listen:⁹⁹ You will become pregnant¹⁰⁰ and give birth to¹⁰¹ a son, and you will name him¹⁰² Jesus.¹⁰³

(Luk 1:32) He¹⁰⁴ will be great,¹⁰⁵ and will be called the Son of the Most High,¹⁰⁶ and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father¹⁰⁷ David.

(Luk 1:33) He¹⁰⁸ will reign over the house of Jacob¹⁰⁹ forever, and his kingdom will never end."

(Luk 1:34) Mary¹¹⁰ said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not had sexual relations with¹¹¹ a man?"

(Luk 1:35) The angel replied,¹¹² "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow¹¹³ you. Therefore the child¹¹⁴ to be born¹¹⁵ will be holy;¹¹⁶ he will be called the Son of God.

(Luk 1:36) "And look,¹¹⁷ your relative¹¹⁸ Elizabeth has also become pregnant with¹¹⁹ a son in her old age — although she was called barren, she is now in her sixth month!¹²⁰

(Luk 1:37) For nothing¹²¹ will be impossible with God."

(Luk 1:38) So¹²² Mary said, "Yes,¹²³ I am a servant¹²⁴ of the Lord; let this happen to me¹²⁵ according to your word."¹²⁶ Then¹²⁷ the angel departed from her.

(Luk 1:39) ***Mary and Elizabeth***

In those days¹²⁸ Mary got up and went hurriedly into the hill country, to a town of Judah,¹²⁹

(Luk 1:40) and entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth.

(Luk 1:41) When¹³⁰ Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped¹³¹ in her¹³² womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.¹³³

(Luk 1:42) She¹³⁴ exclaimed with a loud voice,¹³⁵ "Blessed are you among women,¹³⁶ and blessed is the child¹³⁷ in your womb!

(Luk 1:43) And who am I¹³⁸ that the mother of my Lord should come and visit me?

(Luk 1:44) For the instant¹³⁹ the sound of your greeting reached my ears,¹⁴⁰ the baby in my womb leaped for joy.¹⁴¹

(Luk 1:45) And blessed¹⁴² is she who believed that¹⁴³ what was spoken to her by¹⁴⁴ the Lord would be fulfilled."¹⁴⁵

(Luk 1:46) ***Mary's Hymn of Praise***

And Mary¹⁴⁶ said,¹⁴⁷

"My soul exalts¹⁴⁸ the Lord,¹⁴⁹

(Luk 1:47) and my spirit has begun to rejoice¹⁵⁰ in God my Savior,

(Luk 1:48) because he has looked upon the humble state of his servant.¹⁵¹

For¹⁵² from now on¹⁵³ all generations will call me blessed,¹⁵⁴

(Luk 1:49) because he who is mighty¹⁵⁵ has done great things for me, and holy is his name; (Luk 1:50) from¹⁵⁶ generation to generation he is merciful¹⁵⁷ to those who fear¹⁵⁸ him.

(Luk 1:51) He has demonstrated power¹⁵⁹ with his arm; he has scattered those whose pride wells up from the sheer arrogance¹⁶⁰ of their hearts.

(Luk 1:52) He has brought down the mighty¹⁶¹ from their thrones, and has lifted up those of lowly position;¹⁶²

(Luk 1:53) he has filled the hungry with good things,¹⁶³ and has sent the rich away empty.¹⁶⁴

(Luk 1:54) He has helped his servant Israel, remembering¹⁶⁵ his mercy,¹⁶⁶

(Luk 1:55) as he promised¹⁶⁷ to our ancestors,¹⁶⁸ to Abraham and to his descendants¹⁶⁹ forever."

(Luk 1:56) So¹⁷⁰ Mary stayed with Elizabeth¹⁷¹ about three months¹⁷² and then returned to her home.

(Luk 1:57) ***The Birth of John***

Now the time came¹⁷³ for Elizabeth to have her baby,¹⁷⁴ and she gave birth to a son.

(Luk 1:58) Her¹⁷⁵ neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown¹⁷⁶ great mercy to her, and they rejoiced¹⁷⁷ with her.

(Luk 1:59) On¹⁷⁸ the eighth day¹⁷⁹ they came to circumcise the child, and they wanted to name¹⁸⁰ him Zechariah after his father.

(Luk 1:60) But¹⁸¹ his mother replied,¹⁸² "No! He must be named¹⁸³ John."¹⁸⁴

(Luk 1:61) They¹⁸⁵ said to her, "But¹⁸⁶ none of your relatives bears this name."¹⁸⁷

(Luk 1:62) So¹⁸⁸ they made signs to the baby's¹⁸⁹ father,¹⁹⁰ inquiring what he wanted to name his son.¹⁹¹

(Luk 1:63) He¹⁹² asked for a writing tablet¹⁹³ and wrote,¹⁹⁴ "His name is John." And they were all amazed.¹⁹⁵

(Luk 1:64) Immediately¹⁹⁶ Zechariah's¹⁹⁷ mouth was opened and his tongue¹⁹⁸ released,¹⁹⁹ and he spoke, blessing God.

(Luk 1:65) All²⁰⁰ their neighbors were filled with fear, and throughout the entire hill country of Judea all these things were talked about.

(Luk 1:66) All²⁰¹ who heard these things²⁰² kept them in their hearts,²⁰³ saying, "What then will this child be?"²⁰⁴ For the Lord's hand²⁰⁵ was indeed with him.

(Luk 1:67) ***Zechariah's Praise and Prediction***

Then²⁰⁶ his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied,²⁰⁷

(Luk 1:68) "Blessed²⁰⁸ be the Lord God of Israel,

because he has come to help²⁰⁹ and has redeemed²¹⁰ his people.

(Luk 1:69) For²¹¹ he has raised up²¹² a horn of salvation²¹³ for us in the house of his servant David,²¹⁴

(Luk 1:70) as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from long ago,²¹⁵

(Luk 1:71) that we should be saved²¹⁶ from our enemies,²¹⁷

and from the hand of all who hate us.

(Luk 1:72) He has done this²¹⁸ to show mercy²¹⁹ to our ancestors,²²⁰

and to remember his holy covenant²²¹ —

(Luk 1:73) the oath²²² that he swore to our ancestor²²³ Abraham.

This oath grants²²⁴

(Luk 1:74) that we, being rescued from the hand of our²²⁵ enemies,

may serve him without fear,²²⁶

(Luk 1:75) in holiness and righteousness²²⁷ before him for as long as we live.²²⁸

(Luk 1:76) And you, child,²²⁹ will be called the prophet²³⁰ of the Most High.²³¹

For you will go before²³² the Lord to prepare his ways,²³³

(Luk 1:77) to give his people knowledge of salvation²³⁴ through the forgiveness²³⁵ of their sins.

(Luk 1:78) Because of²³⁶ our God's tender mercy²³⁷

the dawn²³⁸ will break²³⁹ upon us from on high

(Luk 1:79) to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,²⁴⁰

to guide our feet into the way²⁴¹ of peace."

(Luk 1:80) And the child kept growing²⁴² and becoming strong²⁴³ in spirit, and he was in the wilderness²⁴⁴ until the day he was revealed²⁴⁵ to Israel.

(Luk 2:1) ***The Census and the Birth of Jesus***

Now¹ in those days a decree² went out from Caesar³ Augustus⁴ to register⁵ all the empire⁶ for taxes.

(Guzik)

Luk 2:1-52

Luke 2 - JESUS' BIRTH AND BOYHOOD

A. The world Jesus was born into.

1. (Luk_2:1) A decree from Rome reaches the whole Mediterranean world.

And it came to pass in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

a. **It came to pass in those days:** We must always remind ourselves that the Bible records *actual history* and *real events*. This is not “once upon a time.” This is not fanciful stories of Zeus and Apollo on Mount Olympus. This is *real*.

b. **A decree went out from Caesar Augustus:** The story of Jesus' birth began during the reign of one of the most remarkable men of ancient history.

i. He was born with the name Octavian, named after his father. His grandmother was the sister of Julius Caesar, and being a talented young man, Octavian came to the attention of his great uncle. Julius Caesar came to adopt Octavian as his son, and he was made his official heir in 45 b.c. With a year Caesar was murdered, and Octavian joined with two others - Mark Antony and Lepidus in splitting the domination of Rome three ways. For decades, the whole Mediterranean world was filled with wars and violence; now, under the Triumverate, it became far worse. There were years of bloody, brutal fighting for power and money in Rome and the provinces.

ii. Octavian and Antony soon pushed Lepidus out of the picture. Even though his sister married Antony, for thirteen years Octavian and Antony existed together as rivals, until 31

b.c. For a year, the huge armies of Octavian and Antony assembled and positioned themselves. Antony, with the help of Cleopatra, brought 500 warships, 100,000 foot soldiers, and 12,000 cavalry. Octavian answered with 400 warships, 80,000 infantry and 12,000

horsemen. But Octavian had the better strategy and the more mobile ships, and he defeated the combined forces of Antony and Queen Cleopatra of Egypt at the battle of Actium. Now Octavius was the sole ruler of the Roman world. c. For decades, the **world** Augustus lived in and Jesus would be born into, the world of the Mediterranean basin, was wracked by wars, destruction, brutality, and immorality.

i. "The lusty peninsula was worn out with twenty years of civil war. Its farms had been neglected, its towns had been sacked or besieged, much of its wealth had been stolen or destroyed. Administration and protection had broken down; robbers made every street unsafe at night; highwaymen roamed the roads, kidnapped travelers, and sold them into slavery. Trade diminished, investment stood still, interest rates soared, property values fell.

Morals, which had been loosened by riches and luxury, had not been improved by destitution and chaos, for few conditions are more demoralizing than poverty that comes after wealth.

Rome was full of men who had lost their economic footing and then their moral stability: soldiers who had tasted adventure and had learned to kill; citizens who had seen their savings consumed in the taxes and inflation of war and waited vacuously for some returning tide to life them back to affluence; women dizzy with freedom, multiplying divorces, abortions, and adulteries." (Durant)

d. **Caesar Augustus** changed that in a dramatic way. He brought three things that turned the tide miraculously. First, he brought peace because he had defeated all his rivals. Second, he brought political and administrative skill, perhaps even brilliance. Third, he brought a truckload of money from Egypt to pay all the soldiers and pump up the Roman economy.

i. "Jesus was born in the reign of Augustus. After a long period of wars which had racked the Mediterranean and its shores, political unity had been achieved and the Roman

Empire had become roughly coterminous with the Mediterranean Basin. Here and there it was soon to spread beyond it. Augustus was the first Emperor. Building on the foundations laid by his uncle, Julius Caesar, he brought peace and under the guise of the chief citizen of a restored republic ruled the realm which for several generations Rome had been building. The internal peace and order which Augustus achieved endured, with occasional interruptions, for about two centuries. Never before had all the shores of the Mediterranean been under one rule and never had they enjoyed such prosperity. The *pax Romana* made for the spread of ideas and religions over the area where it prevailed." (Latourette)

e. But as great a man as **Caesar Augustus** was, he was only a man. And the man who brought the answers also took a dear price. He demanded absolute power over the Roman Empire.

i. For hundreds and hundreds of years, Rome prided itself on being a *republic* - a nation governed by laws, not by any man. The idea that no man was above the law, and the Roman Senate and the army and various political leaders lived together in a sometimes difficult arrangement. Now, Octavius would change all that. In 27 b.c. he arranged for the Roman Senate to give him the title *Augustus*, which means "exalted" and "sacred." Now Rome wasn't a *republic*, governed by laws; it was an *empire* governed by an *emperor*. The first Emperor of Rome was this same **Caesar Augustus**.

ii. Durant on the title *Augustus*: "Hitherto the word had been applied only to holy objects and places, and to certain creative or augmenting divinities; applied to Octavian it clothed him with a halo of sanctity, and the protection of religion and the gods."

iii. One of his early titles was *imperator*, the commander in chief of all the armed forces of the state. But he came to make the title mean *emperor*.

f. This says something important about the world Jesus was born into. It was a world hungry for a savior, and a world that was living in the reign of a *political* savior - **Caesar Augustus** - but that wasn't enough.

i. "In the century before Christ was born the evidences of disintegration were so palpable in wars, in the passing of the old order, and in moral corruption, that the thoughtful feared early collapse. From this disaster the Mediterranean Basin was saved by Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar . . . [but] we must note that the principate devised by Augustus did not cure but only temporarily halted the course of the disease from which Graeco-Roman culture was suffering." (Latourette)

ii. "Augustus and his successors had not solved the basic problems of the Mediterranean world. They had obscured them. For what appeared to be a failure in government they had substituted more government, and government was not the answer." (Latourette)

2. (Luk_2:2) The governor of the Roman administrative region near Galilee.

This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.

a. **While Quirinius was governing Syria** is another historical "anchor." This isn't make-believe, but real, accurate history.

b. **This census:** The "registration" and **census** described wasn't for simple record-keeping or statistics. It was to efficiently and effectively tax everyone in the Roman Empire.

i. Justin Martyr, writing in the middle of the second century, said that in his own day, more than a hundred years after the time of Jesus, you could look up the registers of the same census Luke mentions.

c. **First took place:** The idea in the original language is that this was "the first enrollment." Using a census for taxation was common in ancient Rome, so Luke calls this

one “the first enrollment” to distinguish it from the well-known enrollment in 6 a.d. that he later mentions in Act_5:37.

3. (Luk_2:3) The world responds to the command of Caesar Augustus.

So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

a. **So all went to be registered:** Amazing! One man, in the ivory palaces of Rome, gives a command - and the whole world responds! It may well be that up to that point, there had never been a man with power over more lives than Caesar Augustus.

i. Overall, Caesar Augustus was a good ruler. He expanded the territory of the Roman Empire and he did much for his people. The greatest sorrows of his life came from his home, because he had an out-of-control daughter, no son, and all of his nephews, grandsons, and his favorite stepson died young. But like most every man of such ambition and authority, he thought a lot of himself. We can just imagine how invincible he felt when he made a *decree* . .

. *that all the world should be registered* for taxation. It’s pretty heady to think, “I make the command and the whole Roman world has to obey it!”

ii. But Augustus wasn’t really powerful at all. In Joh_19:10-11, Jesus confronted another Roman who believed he was powerful. *Then Pilate said to Him, “Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?” Jesus answered, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.”* The same principle applies towards Caesar Augustus.

iii. As he sat in his palace and made his decree, he thought it was the supreme exercise of his will, the ultimate flexing of his muscle. But he was just a tool in God’s hand. God had promised that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Mic_5:2), and that promise would be fulfilled. So how do you get a young couple from Nazareth down to Bethlehem

when they might not be inclined to travel? Simple. Just work through the *political* “savior of the world,” and use him as a pawn in your plan.

iv. We also see that Augustus, for all his accomplishments, couldn’t really be the answer. God allowed Caesar Augustus to rise to unheard of human power for many reasons; in some ways, he was a “Roman John the Baptist” preparing the way for Jesus. At the end of the story, what is important is Jesus. Who does the world know more today - Jesus or Caesar Augustus?

Who has a more lasting legacy?

b. **Everyone to his own city:** There is no record in secular history that Augustus decreed this census and commanded it be performed in this manner, but it was consistent with what we do know of him from history. Augustus was known to be very sensitive to the nationalistic feelings of his subjects, and so he commanded them to return to their cities of family origin for the census.

i. In this way, Augustus softened the blow for many. They had to travel, they had to pay taxes - but they would also gather together with family, and see relatives that they perhaps had not seen for a long time.

B. The birth of Jesus.

1. (Luk_2:4-7) Joseph and Mary come to Bethlehem; Jesus is born.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

a. **Joseph also went up from Galilee:** The trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem is about 80 miles. This was not a

short distance in those days. It was a significant undertaking, costing time and money.

b. With Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child:

We often think that Mary was close to delivery when they made this journey, but this may not have been the case at all. Joseph may have been anxious to get her out of Nazareth to avoid the pressure of scandal. Luke tells us that it was while they were in Bethlehem, **that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.**

i. According to the Roman law, Mary didn't have to go with Joseph for the tax census; but it made sense for her to go with Joseph, especially because she was in the latter stages of a controversial pregnancy - surely the subject of much gossip in Nazareth.

ii. "It is possible that he used the emperor's order as a means of removing Mary from possible gossip and emotional stress in her own village. He had already accepted her as his wife (Mat_1:24), but apparently continued in betrothal (Luk_2:5), pledged to be married, till after the birth." (Liefeld)

c. And she brought forth her firstborn Son: One of the striking things about Luke's narrative is how simple it is in contrast to how great the events are. Our modern world hypes meaningless events so much (like the Super Bowl), that it is hard for us to appreciate how simply stated this greatest of events can be.

d. She brought forth is filled with wonder. We are not told that anyone assisted Mary in the birth, though someone may have. One way or another, this young woman was completely separated from all her family and supporting friends, who lived back in Nazareth.

i. "The narrative runs as if Mary did these things herself, whence the patristic inference of a painless birth." (Bruce) "That Mary wrapped the child herself points to a lonely birth."

(Morris)

ii. Even Joseph must have felt strange at the time. Perhaps it was a feeling something like, “God, I know this is something great but I don’t really understand it and it makes me nervous.”

e. By reading **firstborn son**, we should make the logical conclusion: Mary had other children as well, despite the Roman Catholic dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary.

f. **Swaddling cloths** are snugly wrapped strips of cloth. More remarkable than the swaddling cloths is the fact that He was laid in a **manger** - a feeding trough for animals.

g. When did this happen? The date of December 25 has problems, but is not impossible; this date was first popularized in the church since the fourth century.

h. Where did this happen? In 150 a.d., Justin Martyr said that the place Jesus was born was a cave in Bethlehem. Later on, in 330, Constantine the Great made a church over the cave, which many believe is still the most probable place where Jesus was born.

2. (Luk_2:8) Shepherds watch over their flocks.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

a. **Now there were in the same country shepherds:** Bethlehem’s shepherds were known to care for the temple flock. These men may have been protecting and caring for the sacrificial lambs.

b. **Living out in the fields:** Many have said that a late December date is impossible, because shepherds would not have been out at night at that time of year. Nevertheless, warm winters are not unknown in Judea, which has a climate remarkably like Southern California.

3. (Luk_2:9-14) The angelic announcement.

And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to

all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

a. **An angel of the Lord stood before them:** Interrupting this quiet, dark night was the shining presence of angels and **the glory of the Lord**. The angels brought **good tidings** (literally it means that they preached the gospel) to these shepherds, who were regarded as social outcasts.

i. “As a class shepherds had a bad reputation . . . More regrettable was their habit of confusing ‘mine’ with ‘thine’ as they moved about the country. They were considered unreliable and were not allowed to give testimony in the law courts.” (Morris)

b. **For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior:** They announce the birth of a **Savior**, which is exactly what mankind needs. We don’t need another an advisor, a reformer, or a committee, but a **Savior**.

c. **Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God:** After the single angel’s announcement, a whole group of angels appeared. This was a **heavenly host** (a band of soldiers) that proclaimed peace. The world needed then and needs now **peace**.

i. Even the pagans of the first century world sensed this need for peace and a savior.

Epictetus, a first century pagan writer, expressed this: “While the emperor may give peace from war on land and sea, he is unable to give peace from passion, grief, and envy; he cannot give peace of heart, for which man yearn for more than even outward peace.”

d. The contrast between the angelic glory and the humble Jesus must have seemed extreme. God loves to put His glory

in unlikely packages so His glory is more clearly displayed (2Co_4:7).

4. (Luk_2:15-16) The shepherds come and see the child Jesus.

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

a. **Let us now go** shows a real urgency. They didn't hesitate at all.

b. **And see this thing that has come to pass:** The angel told them to look for *a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger* (Luk_2:12). It wasn't an unusual *sign* to see a baby *wrapped in swaddling cloths*, but it was strange to see a baby *lying in a manger* - a feeding trough. If the angel had not told them to look for such a specific sign, they would never have believed it.

c. They **found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger**. This was a strange sight! "This was a revolting sight, and was sufficient of itself to produce an aversion to Christ. For what could be more improbable than to believe that he was the King of the whole people, who was deemed unworthy to be ranked with the lowest of the multitude?" (Calvin)

5. (Luk_2:17-20) The shepherds spread the news of Jesus' birth.

Now when they had seen *Him*, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

a. **Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart:** “The wonder of the many was a transient emotion (aorist), this recollecting and brooding of Mary was an abiding habit (imperfect).”

(Bruce)

i. Mary had good reason to meditate. What had brought her to Bethlehem? An emperor’s great decree from Rome, and gossiping tongues in Nazareth. God works through all kinds of people and all kinds of events to accomplish His plan.

b. “Their zeal in *glorifying and praising God* is an implied reproof of our indolence, or rather of our ingratitude. If the cradle of Christ had such an effect upon them, as to make them rise from the stable and the manger to heaven, how much more powerful ought the death and resurrection of Christ to be in raising us to God?” (Calvin)

C. Jesus’ presentation in the temple.

1. (Luk_2:21-24) The circumcision and presentation of Jesus. And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

a. **And when eight days were completed:** This was done so Jesus might fulfill every aspect of the law (Lev_12:2-3). It also shows that Joseph and Mary were truly devout, obedient parents. They obeyed God’s command in Leviticus 12, so Jesus obeyed it also.

i. The training of our children in the ways of the Lord means that we should be going the same way.

b. **Circumcision . . . the days of her purification:** The circumcision and purification ceremonies were necessary as a reminder that we are all born in sin (Psa_51:5). Jesus *could*

have been excused because He was not born in sin. Yet, we see Him even as a baby, identifying with sinners, as He did at His baptism and on the cross.

i. The correct reading of Luk_2:22 is “now when the days of *their* purification . . . were completed.” Jesus was identified with sinners even as a baby

ii. “Let us now speak first of the purification. Luke makes it apply both to Mary and to Christ: for the pronoun *of them*, can have no reference whatever to Joseph.” (Calvin) c. **A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons:** Also, their offering (two birds, not a lamb) shows that Joseph and Mary were not wealthy. Lev_12:8 says the offering after childbirth was to be a bird and a lamb, but if the family could not afford to sacrifice a lamb, they could present two birds.

d. This no doubt happened before the wise men came from the east (Mat_2:1-12). Mary and Joseph would not have returned to Jerusalem after being warned by the angel (Mat_2:13), and they would not have offered only two birds after receiving the rich gifts from the wise men (Mat_2:11).

i. We see that Mary and Joseph were poor here, but the Lord provided their needs abundantly through the gifts of the wise men. God always provides!

2. (Luk_2:25-32) A promise fulfilled to Simeon.

And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: “Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to *bring* revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.”

a. **Waiting for the Consolation of Israel:** Simeon may have known that there were rumors of something happening regarding the coming of the Messiah. The news of John the Baptist's birth and its meaning was widely publicized (Luk_1:65), and the shepherds who heard the angelic announcement may have kept temple flocks, and they may have reported what happened among the people of the temple.

b. **So he came by the Spirit into the temple:** It was not rumors, but the **Spirit** who led him into the temple on that day. Simeon was a man who knew how to be led by the Holy Spirit, both in hearing God's promise to him and being prompted to go to the temple at the right time.

c. **He took Him up in his arms:** Simeon's prophecy is filled with love for his Savior; and he hardly knows Jesus! We who know so much more about Him should love Him even more.

d. **According to Your word:** Simeon now had the peace of seeing God's promise fulfilled in his life.

e. **You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation:** It's as if Simeon was commanded by God to keep a lonely watch through the night until he saw the sun come up; here is God's sunrise, and because Jesus has come, Simeon can be relieved of his watch.

f. **A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles:** The amazing thing about Simeon's prophecy is that it shows that this **light** is for the Gentiles also. The salvation of Jesus began with Israel, but was always to be extended beyond Israel.

3. (Luk_2:33-35) A promise and a warning from Simeon.

And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this *Child* is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own

soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

a. **Joseph and His mother marveled:** We can imagine their combination of joy and surprise to see how God has touched the hearts of *others* with an understanding of their Son is. No matter how well you know Jesus, there is something special about seeing someone else come to know Him.

b. **For the fall and rising of many:** This is shown in the way that Peter repents, but Judas despairs; in that one thief blasphemes, the other believes. Jesus is like a magnet that is attractive to some, but others are repelled from Him.

i. **And a sign which will be spoken against:** **Sign** is literally “a target that people shoot at.” Jesus would surely be the target of much evil.

c. **A sword will pierce through your own soul also:** It was important for Mary to know that mothering the Messiah would not be all sweetness and light. It was both a great privilege and a great burden.

i. Possibly no other human agonized as much over Jesus’ rejection and suffering as His mother did. This was not only because of the natural love of a mother, but also because His rejection was her rejection. Wonderfully, His vindication was hers also.

4. (Luk_2:36-38) Anna’s testimony to the Redeemer.

Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman *was* a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

a. **Anna, a prophetess:** We don’t know in what capacity Anna was a **prophetess**. Perhaps it was in the way that she brought forth this specific word about Jesus.

b. **Who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day:** This godly woman served God with total devotion. Anna's close walk with God is shown by her *love* for Jesus, and her desire to *tell others* about Jesus (**spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption**).

i. Again, Anna knew almost nothing about Jesus, compared to what we know about Him - yet see how she loved Him!

5. (Luk_2:39-40) The return to Nazareth.

So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their *own* city, Nazareth. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

a. **When they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord:** Luke wants to emphasize that Jesus was perfectly obedient to God, even as a child.

b. Jesus **became strong in spirit**. We want to raise children who are spiritually strong, strong enough to resist the pressures of this world.

c. Jesus was **filled with wisdom**. We want to raise children who are wise in the things of God, who have true wisdom from God's Word.

c. **The grace of God was upon Him:** We want our children to have **the grace of God upon** them. This happens as we are *good stewards of the manifold grace of God* (1Pe_4:10) in our own lives, faithfully dispensing grace to our children, and as we pray with them and for them for an outpouring of God's grace in their lives.

D. Jesus in His Father's house.

1. (Luk_2:41-45) Jesus is lost on a Passover pilgrimage.

His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know *it*; but supposing Him to have been in the

company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among *their* relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

a. We know nothing of Jesus' life from the time He was one month old to the time when He was twelve, except for the general statement in Luk_2:40. We may be curious about the details of His childhood, but there isn't anything we *need* to know except what we are told by the Holy Spirit in the Word.

i. To satisfy this curiosity, men wrote their own so-called "Infancy Gospels." In them, we are told of strange, spectacular and silly miracles like Jesus talking from the manger; healing a man made into a mule by a spell; bringing clay birds to life with a clap of His hands; healing people with a sprinkling with his old bath water, and so forth.

b. His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover: Attendance at the major feasts was commanded in Exo_23:17 and Deu_16:16. It was customary for the faithful of Galilee to make these pilgrimages at feast time in large groups. It would not be difficult to lose track of a young boy with such a large group of travelers - we shouldn't accuse Joseph and Mary of child neglect. But Mary must have felt badly enough, losing the Messiah.

2. (Luk_2:46-50) They find Jesus teaching and learning in the temple.

Now so it was *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be

about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

a. **Sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions:** For **three days**, a twelve year-old Jesus discussed God's Word and astonished His listeners with **His understanding and answers**.

i. When we realize the impressive intellectual insight and analysis of Jewish Rabbis, this *is* impressive. This is sort of like a junior high school kid discussing physics with Einstein. Although, Jesus had a unique advantage, He had a special relationship with the writer of God's Word.

b. **I must be about My Father's business:** In that day, there was nothing more natural than a son taking up his father's business. Jesus did follow in Joseph's footsteps as a carpenter, but His words here show that He is at least beginning to understand His unique relationship to His Father.

i. It is impossible to say when, in the context of the self-imposed limitations of His humanity, Jesus realized who He was and what He was sent to do, but it was early - this is probably the not when it began, but when it was in full flower.

c. Jewish teachers had determined that at twelve, a boy must begin to learn his trade - so Jesus is just being **about His Father's business**.

3. (Luk_2:51-52) The growth and development of Jesus.

Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

a. **And was subject to them:** The knowledge of who He was did not make Jesus proud or haughty; Jesus **was subject to them**. He already has the *mind which was also in Christ Jesus* (Php_2:5-11), the mind willing to put all glory into such a humble package.

b. **His mother kept all these things in her heart:** Luke probably heard of all this (and of the events about John's and Jesus' births) in personal interviews with Mary as he compiled his Gospel.

c. Jesus **increased in wisdom.** The development described first in Luk_2:40 continued.

d. Jesus **increased in . . . stature.** Not only did He become bigger physically He also became a bigger *person*.

e. Jesus **increased in . . . favor with God and men:** He grew in a close, personal relationship with His heavenly Father, and He also grew in His human friendships and relationships.

f. Jesus was not born a "superman." He developed as He grew. "He passed through a natural but perfect spiritual and physical development. At every stage He was perfect for that stage." (Geldenhuys) (Luk 2:2) This was the first registration, taken when Quirinius was governor⁷ of Syria.

(Luk 2:3) Everyone⁸ went to his own town⁹ to be registered.

(Luk 2:4) So¹⁰ Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth¹¹ in Galilee to Judea, to the city¹² of David called Bethlehem,¹³ because he was of the house¹⁴ and family line¹⁵ of David.

(Luk 2:5) He went¹⁶ to be registered with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him,¹⁷ and who was expecting a child.

(Luk 2:6) While¹⁸ they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.¹⁹

(Luk 2:7) And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in strips of cloth²⁰ and laid him in a manger,²¹ because there was no place for them in the inn.²²

(Luk 2:8) ***The Shepherds' Visit***

Now²³ there were shepherds²⁴ nearby²⁵ living out in the field, keeping guard²⁶ over their flock at night.

(Luk 2:9) An²⁷ angel of the Lord²⁸ appeared to²⁹ them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were absolutely terrified.³⁰

(Luk 2:10) But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid! Listen carefully,³¹ for I proclaim to you good news³² that brings great joy to all the people: (Luk 2:11) Today³³ your Savior is born in the city³⁴ of David.³⁵ He is Christ³⁶ the Lord.

(Luk 2:12) This³⁷ will be a sign³⁸ for you: You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."³⁹

(Luk 2:13) Suddenly⁴⁰ a vast, heavenly army⁴¹ appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, (Luk 2:14) "Glory⁴² to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among people⁴³ with whom he is pleased!"⁴⁴

(Luk 2:15) When⁴⁵ the angels left them and went back to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem⁴⁶ and see this thing that has taken place, that the Lord⁴⁷ has made known to us."

(Luk 2:16) So they hurried off and located Mary and Joseph, and found the baby lying in a manger.⁴⁸

(Luk 2:17) When⁴⁹ they saw him,⁵⁰ they related what they had been told⁵¹ about this child, (Luk 2:18) and all who heard it were astonished⁵² at what the shepherds said.

(Luk 2:19) But Mary treasured up all these words, pondering in her heart what they might mean.⁵³

(Luk 2:20) So⁵⁴ the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising⁵⁵ God for all they had heard and seen; everything was just as they had been told.⁵⁶

(Luk 2:21) At⁵⁷ the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name given by the angel⁵⁸ before he was conceived in the womb.

(Luk 2:22) ***Jesus' Presentation at the Temple***

Now⁵⁹ when the time came for their⁶⁰ purification according to the law of Moses, Joseph and Mary⁶¹ brought Jesus⁶² up to Jerusalem⁶³ to present him to the Lord

(Luk 2:23) (just as it is written in the law of the Lord, " *Every firstborn male* ⁶⁴ *will be set apart to the Lord*"⁶⁵), (Luk 2:24) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is specified in the law of the Lord, ***a pair of doves*** ⁶⁶ ***or two young pigeons***.⁶⁷

(Luk 2:25) ***The Prophecy of Simeon***

Now⁶⁸ there was a man in Jerusalem⁶⁹ named Simeon who was righteous⁷⁰ and devout, looking for the restoration⁷¹ of Israel, and the Holy Spirit⁷² was upon him.

(Luk 2:26) It⁷³ had been revealed⁷⁴ to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die⁷⁵ before⁷⁶ he had seen the Lord's Christ.⁷⁷

(Luk 2:27) So⁷⁸ Simeon,⁷⁹ directed by the Spirit,⁸⁰ came into the temple courts,⁸¹ and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary according to the law,⁸²

(Luk 2:28) Simeon⁸³ took him in his arms and blessed God, saying,⁸⁴

(Luk 2:29) "Now, according to your word,⁸⁵ Sovereign Lord,⁸⁶ permit⁸⁷ your servant⁸⁸ to depart⁸⁹ in peace.

(Luk 2:30) For my eyes have seen your salvation⁹⁰

(Luk 2:31) that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:⁹¹

(Luk 2:32) a light,⁹²

for revelation to the Gentiles,

and for glory⁹³ to your people Israel."

(Luk 2:33) So⁹⁴ the child's⁹⁵ father⁹⁶ and mother were amazed⁹⁷ at what was said about him.

(Luk 2:34) Then⁹⁸ Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "Listen carefully:⁹⁹ This child¹⁰⁰ is destined to be the cause of the falling and rising¹⁰¹ of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be rejected.¹⁰²

(Luk 2:35) Indeed, as a result of him the thoughts¹⁰³ of many hearts will be revealed¹⁰⁴ — and a sword¹⁰⁵ will pierce your own soul as well!"¹⁰⁶

(Luk 2:36) ***The Testimony of Anna***

There was also a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old,¹⁰⁷ having been married to her husband for seven years until his death.

(Luk 2:37) She had lived as a widow since then for eighty-four years.¹⁰⁸ She never left the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.¹⁰⁹

(Luk 2:38) At that moment,¹¹⁰ she came up to them¹¹¹ and began to give thanks to God and to speak¹¹² about the child¹¹³ to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.¹¹⁴

(Luk 2:39) So¹¹⁵ when Joseph and Mary¹¹⁶ had performed¹¹⁷ everything according to the law of the Lord,¹¹⁸ they returned to Galilee, to their own town¹¹⁹ of Nazareth.¹²⁰

(Luk 2:40) And the child grew and became strong,¹²¹ filled with wisdom,¹²² and the favor¹²³ of God¹²⁴ was upon him.

(Luk 2:41) ***Jesus in the Temple***

Now¹²⁵ Jesus'¹²⁶ parents went to Jerusalem¹²⁷ every¹²⁸ year for the feast of the Passover.¹²⁹

(Luk 2:42) When¹³⁰ he was twelve years old,¹³¹ they went up¹³² according to custom.

(Luk 2:43) But¹³³ when the feast was over,¹³⁴ as they were returning home,¹³⁵ the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His¹³⁶

parents¹³⁷ did not know it,

(Luk 2:44) but (because they assumed that he was in their group of travelers)¹³⁸ they went a day's journey. Then¹³⁹ they began to look for him among their relatives and acquaintances.¹⁴⁰

(Luk 2:45) When¹⁴¹ they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem¹⁴² to look for him.

(Luk 2:46) After¹⁴³ three days¹⁴⁴ they found him in the temple courts,¹⁴⁵ sitting among the teachers,¹⁴⁶ listening to them and asking them questions.

(Luk 2:47) And all who heard Jesus¹⁴⁷ were astonished¹⁴⁸ at his understanding and his answers.

(Luk 2:48) When¹⁴⁹ his parents¹⁵⁰ saw him, they were overwhelmed. His¹⁵¹ mother said to him, "Child,¹⁵² why have you treated¹⁵³ us like this? Look, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously."¹⁵⁴

(Luk 2:49) But¹⁵⁵ he replied,¹⁵⁶ "Why were you looking for me?¹⁵⁷ Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"¹⁵⁸

(Luk 2:50) Yet¹⁵⁹ his parents¹⁶⁰ did not understand¹⁶¹ the remark¹⁶² he made¹⁶³ to them.

(Luk 2:51) Then¹⁶⁴ he went down with them and came to Nazareth,¹⁶⁵ and was obedient¹⁶⁶ to them. But¹⁶⁷ his mother kept all these things¹⁶⁸ in her heart.¹⁶⁹

(Luk 2:52) And Jesus increased¹⁷⁰ in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and with people.

(Luk 3:1) ***The Ministry of John the Baptist***

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar,¹ when Pontius Pilate² was governor of Judea, and Herod³ was tetrarch⁴ of Galilee, and his brother Philip⁵ was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias⁶ was tetrarch of Abilene, (Guzik)

Luk 3:1-38

Luke 3 - THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

A. The mission of John the Baptist.

1. (Luk_3:1-2 a) The time is described in reference to the contemporary political and religious leaders.

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests,

a. **In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar:** Biblical chronology can be a complicated matter. From secular historical records we know with certainty the *general* time this was, but it is hard to be certain *exactly* when this was. The best reckoning puts it anywhere from 27 to 29 a.d.

b. **Tiberius Caesar . . . Pontius Pilate . . . Herod . . . Philip . . . Lysanias:** Luke lists the *political* leaders of the region Jesus ministered in. Like any good historian, Luke gives us a real, historical framework. This is not a fairy tale beginning with “once upon a time.”

i. Luke gives more than a chronological measure, he tells us something of the tenor of the times. **Tiberius** was a emperor known for his cruelty and severity. **Pontius Pilate** was also renowned for his brutal massacres of the Jewish people in Judea, and his insensitivity towards the Jews. The rulers from the family of Herod the Great (**Herod, Philip, and Lysanias**) were known for their corruption and cruelty. Luke reminds both his original readers and us today of the corruption and moral degradation of the Roman Empire, especially in the distant provinces like Judea.

ii. The historical reality of these rulers is beyond dispute. Archaeologists have discovered specific, undeniable evidence that these people lived and ruled in these places and at these times.

c. **Caiaphas . . . Annas:** Luke lists the *religious* leaders of Judea in the period of Jesus’ ministry.

Caiaphas was actually the High Priest, but his father-in-law **Annas** (the patriarch of the family) was the real influence

among the priests.

i. The mention of these two corrupt high priests reminds us that the Jewish leaders were more interested in power politics than in serving God.

ii. In 1992, scholars discovered what they believe to be the tomb of **Caiaphas**. In an ancient burial box from the era is an inscription with his name. Inside the box are the only physical remains from any specific individual mentioned in the Bible.

2. (Luk_3:2-3) The ministry of John the Baptist.

The word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,

a. **The word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness:** John lived in the desert since his youth (Luk_1:80). But now, prompted by **the word of God**, John begins to fulfill his ultimate calling: to be a forerunner of the Messiah.

i. God's *timing* is just as important as His *call*. God had a specific thing for John to do, and a specific timing for him to do it in.

b. John preached **a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins**. The idea behind **remission** is not only forgiveness, but liberty and deliverance (as in *to preach deliverance . . . to set at liberty* in Luk_4:18).

i. **Baptism of repentance:** There was nothing strange in the ceremony of **baptism** (a ceremonial immersion) itself. The strange thing was that *Jews* submitted to baptism. This was a common ritual for Gentiles who wanted to become Jews. For a Jew to submit to baptism was to say, "I'm as bad as a heathen Gentile." This was a true mark of humble repentance, a radical rededication to the Lord.

ii. This is different than our *baptism into Christ* (Rom_6:3-4) where our immersion in water identifies us with Jesus' death and resurrection. This **baptism of repentance** John

presented identified a person with their need to get right with God and be cleansed.

3. (Luk_3:4-6) John's ministry as a fulfillment of prophecy.

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

a. **As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:** Luke connects John the Baptist with the one prophesied by Isaiah. John himself would be aware of this from his early days, because his father was aware of it from before John's birth (Luk_1:76-77).

b. **Prepare the way of the Lord:** John's great message is that things *can* be set right. The Messiah is here to do things that are too big for man: filling valleys, leveling mountains, setting crooked roads straight and rough roads smooth.

i. The Jews at that time thought that the problem was mainly "*them*" - that is, the Romans who politically oppressed them. John made them see that when you got right down to it, the problem was really with *me*, not *them*. *I* have to get right with God.

c. **All flesh shall see the salvation of God:** The way of the Messiah must be made ready. He is coming to *all mankind*. (NIV)

B. The message of John the Baptist.

1. (Luk_3:7-9) John's message to the multitudes.

Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which

does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

a. **Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** Addressing your audience as a *family of snakes* is not a customary way to begin a sermon. Asking them “*why are you here anyway?*”

isn’t a smooth introduction. But John wasn’t interested in preaching a soft message or tickling ears.

i. At the same time, we should admit it: John was weird. Any man who preached like this, lived in the desert, wore funny clothes and lived on grasshoppers and wild honey was just plain *weird*. Jesus didn’t have a “slick” advance man with a thousand dollar suit and a two-hundred dollar haircut. God uses weird people.

b. **Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father’:** John cautions against trusting in Abraham’s merits as sufficient for salvation. It was widely taught that Abraham’s merits were plenty for any Jew’s salvation, and that it was *impossible* for any descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to go to hell.

c. **Bear good fruit:** John is not unreasonable in demanding **good fruit**. True repentance will always have fruit - and the basic fruit of the Christian life is *love* (Gal_5:22 and 1Co_13:1-3).

2. (Luk_3:10-14) John’s message to specific individuals.

So the people asked him, saying, “What shall we do then?” He answered and said to them, “He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.” Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Collect no more than what is appointed for you.” Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, “And what shall we do?” So he said to them, “Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.”

a. **What shall we do then?** John’s instructions are quite ordinary: he demands that people share, and that they be

fair with each other, and that they do not be mean and cruel; that they be happy with what they get. These are things we teach our smallest children!

i. Integrity in the *ordinary* things is still the best mark of one genuinely repenting; we often think that what God requires of us as an impossible, huge task. In reality, the things God tells us to do are very simple and straightforward.

ii. *He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?* (Mic_6:8) iii. Often we are more willing to be faithful in great, dramatic tasks than in the ordinary things.

b. Collect no more than what is appointed for you . . . Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages: John did not see tax collecting or soldiering as inherently evil. He did not command these to quit their professions, but to conduct themselves honestly in them.

i. The Romans taxed by auctioning the rights to collect taxes to the highest bidder. Because the tax collector could only cover his costs and make a profit by getting as much as he could, these men were hated intensely.

c. What would John the Baptist say to you? How would the message of “you can turn from the wrong you’re doing!” touch your life?

i. A young pastor in a logging town noticed that the wood cutters would brand their stamp on the end of each log as they put it in the river to float down to the mill. That way, the mill would credit them for the log. One day, down at the river, he noticed that some men from his church were sawing the ends off of some logs so the stamp would be gone and they could claim the logs as their own. That Sunday, the pastor preached a sermon on “Thou Shalt Not Steal,” but he noticed the same men did the same thing the following week. The next Sunday, he titled his sermon “Thou Shalt Not

Saw the End Off Thy Neighbor's Log" - and was promptly run out of town.

3. (Luk_3:15-18) John points forward to a greater One and a greater baptism.

Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ *or* not, John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." And with many other exhortations he preached to the people.

a. **All reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not:** John made such an impact that people logically wondered if he were not the Messiah. Instead of cultivating his own popularity, he gave it all to Jesus. He pointed to **One mightier than I**.

i. **Whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose:** The rabbis of Jesus' day taught that a teacher might require just about anything of his followers *except* to have them take off his sandals. That was going too far! But John says that he is not even worthy to do this for Jesus.

b. **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire:** John says that the Messiah is coming with a different baptism. The Holy Spirit's outpouring was promised as part of the New Covenant. We are promised an *immersion*, an *overflowing* of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This was often experienced as people were prayed for with hands laid on them (Act_6:6; Act_8:17; Act_9:17; Act_13:3-4, and Act_19:6).

c. **His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor:** The Messiah would also bring a baptism of fire, fire that would both *purify* and *destroy* what is lacking, like fire burns up the

worthless chaff. God's power is always a transforming power, a purifying power.

d. The Messiah will also be the one to divide the true from the false, to separate the wheat from the chaff; **the winnowing fan is in His hand**. Judas is set apart from Peter; one thief blasphemes, another believes.

4. (Luk_3:19-20) The boldness of John's message is illustrated.

But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.

a. **He shut John up in prison**: Because John made such a bold stand for the truth, he was punished by Herod, who was steeped in immorality.

C. John baptizes Jesus.

1. (Luk_3:21 a) Jesus is baptized along with the others.

When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; a. **Jesus also was baptized**: Why did Jesus submit to baptism when He had no sin to be cleansed from?

He did it to completely identify Himself with sinful man. This was the same heart that would lead to His ultimate identification with sinful man on the cross.

2. (Luk_3:21-22) The Divine witness to Jesus' standing as the Son of God.

And while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

a. **And while He prayed**: We notice Luke's repeated emphasis on prayer. Other gospel writers describe

this occasion, but only Luke points out that it happened **while He prayed**.

b. **The Holy Spirit . . . and a voice came from heaven:**

The three persons of the Trinity are all manifested at once. The Holy Spirit came **in bodily form like a dove**. The **voice** of God the Father was heard, and the **beloved Son** was baptized.

c. **You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased:**

The **voice** from heaven left no doubt. This wasn't just another sinner being baptized; this was the sinless, Eternal Son of God, pleasing the Father by His identification with sinful man.

d. **In You I am well pleased:** Jesus began His earthly ministry with the blessing of the Father and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus, we can have the same things.

i. In Jesus, we can hear the Father say to us, *This is My beloved son, in you I am well pleased*.

ii. In Jesus, the Holy Spirit can come upon us for empowering and blessing.

D. The genealogy of Jesus.

1. (Luk_3:23 a) The age of Jesus when He began His ministry. Now Jesus Himself began *His ministry at* about thirty years of age, a. **Thirty years of age:** This seems to have been the age of full maturity in the Jewish mind. Priests could begin their service only at 30 (Num_4:2-3).

2. (Luk_3:23-38) Luke's genealogy of Jesus.

Being (as was supposed) *the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah, the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er, the son*

of Jose, *the son* of Eliezer, *the son* of Jorim, *the son* of Matthat, *the son* of Levi, *the son* of Simeon, *the son* of Judah, *the son* of Joseph, *the son* of Jonan, *the son* of Eliakim, *the son* of Melea, *the son* of Menan, *the son* of Mattathah, *the son* of Nathan, *the son* of David, *the son* of Jesse, *the son* of Obed, *the son* of Boaz, *the son* of Salmon, *the son* of Nahshon, *the son* of Amminadab, *the son* of Ram, *the son* of Hezron, *the son* of Perez, *the son* of Judah, *the son* of Jacob, *the son* of Isaac, *the son* of Abraham, *the son* of Terah, *the son* of Nahor, *the son* of Serug, *the son* of Reu, *the son* of Peleg, *the son* of Eber, *the son* of Shelah, *the son* of Cainan, *the son* of Arphaxad, *the son* of Shem, *the son* of Noah, *the son* of Lamech, *the son* of Methuselah, *the son* of Enoch, *the son* of Jared, *the son* of Mahalalel, *the son* of Cainan, *the son* of Enos, *the son* of Seth, *the son* of Adam, *the son* of God.

a. **Being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph:**

According to ancient custom, genealogies were almost always traced through the father, not the mother. This was a problem in the unique situation of a virgin birth.

i. Luke differs in the account of Matthew from David onward, but they both end their genealogies with Joseph. Why? Luke follows Mary's line (Jesus' *actual* lineage) while Matthew follows Joseph's line (His *legal* lineage by adoption). This is Luke's who point in his important phrase **being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph**.

ii. Luke ends with Joseph because he is following proper form and including no women in his genealogy

b. The fact that Luke can give Jesus' genealogical history is not unusual. Josephus traced his own genealogy from "the public records" (*Autobiography*, paragraph 1). It was also well known that the famous Rabbi Hillel could prove his descent from King David with reference from the public registers.

c. **The son of Adam, the son of God:** Luke traces his genealogy all the way back to Adam, to show that Jesus belongs to all mankind, not just to the Jewish people.

i. A genealogy may not seem like much, but it exactly establishes Jesus' credentials as a member of the human race. A Bible translator to a distant tribe saved the genealogies for last, because he thought them the least important part of the gospels. But when he finally finished them last of all, the tribesmen were astounded - they told the translator, "You mean to tell us that this Jesus was a *real* person, with *real* ancestors? We had no idea!"

(Luk 3:2) during the high priesthood⁷ of Annas and Caiaphas, the word⁸ of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.⁹

(Luk 3:3) He¹⁰ went into all the region around the Jordan River,¹¹ preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.¹²

(Luk 3:4) As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, ***"The voice¹³ of one shouting in the wilderness¹⁴***

'Prepare the way for the Lord, make¹⁵ his paths straight.

(Luk 3:5) ***Every valley will be filled,¹⁶ and every mountain and hill will be brought low, and the crooked will be made straight, and the rough ways will be made smooth,***

(Luk 3:6) ***and all humanity¹⁷ will see the salvation of God.'*** " ¹⁸

(Luk 3:7) So John¹⁹ said to the crowds²⁰ that came out to be baptized by him, "You offspring of vipers!²¹ Who warned you to flee²²

from the coming wrath?

(Luk 3:8) Therefore produce²³ fruit²⁴ that proves your repentance, and don't begin to say²⁵ to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'²⁶ For I tell you that God can raise up children for Abraham from these stones!²⁷

(Luk 3:9) Even now the ax is laid at the root of the trees,²⁸ and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be²⁹ cut down and thrown into the fire."

(Luk 3:10) So³⁰ the crowds were asking³¹ him, "What then should we do?"

(Luk 3:11) John³² answered them,³³ "The person who has two tunics³⁴ must share with the person who has none, and the person who has food must do likewise."

(Luk 3:12) Tax collectors³⁵ also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

(Luk 3:13) He told them, "Collect no more³⁶ than you are required to."³⁷

(Luk 3:14) Then some soldiers³⁸ also asked him, "And as for us — what should we do?"³⁹ He told them, "Take money from no one by violence⁴⁰ or by false accusation,⁴¹ and be content with your pay."

(Luk 3:15) While the people were filled with anticipation⁴² and they all wondered⁴³ whether perhaps John⁴⁴ could be the Christ,⁴⁵

(Luk 3:16) John answered them all,⁴⁶ "I baptize you with water,⁴⁷ but one more powerful than I am is coming — I am not worthy⁴⁸ to untie the strap⁴⁹ of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.⁵⁰

(Luk 3:17) His winnowing fork⁵¹ is in his hand to clean out his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his storehouse,⁵² but the chaff he will burn up with inextinguishable fire."⁵³

(Luk 3:18) And in this way,⁵⁴ with many other exhortations, John⁵⁵ proclaimed good news to the people.

(Luk 3:19) But when John rebuked Herod⁵⁶ the tetrarch⁵⁷ because of Herodias, his brother's wife,⁵⁸ and because of all the evil deeds⁵⁹

that he had done,

(Luk 3:20) Herod added this to them all: He locked up John in prison.

(Luk 3:21) ***The Baptism of Jesus***

Now when⁶⁰ all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. And while he was praying,⁶¹ the heavens⁶²

opened, (Luk 3:22) and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove.⁶³ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my one dear Son;⁶⁴ in you I take great delight."⁶⁵ (Luk 3:23) ***The Genealogy of Jesus***

So⁶⁶ Jesus, when he began his ministry,⁶⁷ was about thirty years old. He was⁶⁸ the son (as was supposed)⁶⁹ of Joseph, the son⁷⁰ of Heli,

(Luk 3:24) the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, (Luk 3:25) the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, (Luk 3:26) the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, (Luk 3:27) the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel,⁷¹ the son of Shealtiel,⁷² the son of Neri,⁷³

(Luk 3:28) the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, (Luk 3:29) the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, (Luk 3:30) the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, (Luk 3:31) the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan,⁷⁴ the son of David,⁷⁵

(Luk 3:32) the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala,⁷⁶ the son of Nahshon, (Luk 3:33) the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni,⁷⁷ the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, (Luk 3:34) the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah,⁷⁸ the son of Nahor, (Luk 3:35) the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, (Luk 3:36) the son of Cainan,⁷⁹ the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, (Luk 3:37) the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel,⁸⁰ the son of Kenan,⁸¹ (Luk 3:38) the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.⁸²

(Luk 4:1) ***The Temptation of Jesus***

Then¹ Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River² and was led by the Spirit³ in⁴ the wilderness,⁵
(Guzik)

Luk 4:1-44

Luke 4 - JESUS' TEMPTATION AND FIRST GALILEAN MINISTRY

A. The temptation of Jesus.

1. (Luk_4:1-2 a) Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness. Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil.

a. **Was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted:** After identifying with sinners in baptism, He now identifies with them in temptation. *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.* (Heb_4:15) i. We sometimes think that Jesus' temptations were not real because they were not exactly like ours. There was never a sinful pull or sinful memory inside of Jesus, like in us. But in many ways, Jesus' temptations were more real and more severe. For us, often times the pressure of temptation only relents when we give in - and Jesus never did. He had to withstand a much greater pressure of temptation than you or I ever will.

ii. The word or idea of *temptation* is used in three different senses in the Bible.

o Satan, working through our own lusts, tempts us to perform evil acts - a solicitation to evil (1Co_7:5 and Jam_1:13-14).

o We may tempt (wrongly put to the test) God (Act_5:9 and 1Co_10:9).

o God may test us, but never with a solicitation to evil (Heb_11:17).

b. Jesus was led **by the Spirit into the wilderness**. The Holy Spirit leads us into seasons of wilderness as well as seasons of green pastures.

i. There are parallels with the way that Jesus is tested and the way that Adam was tested; but Adam faced his temptation in the most favorable circumstances imaginable; Jesus faced His temptations in about the worst circumstances.

c. **Being tempted for forty days:** Jesus was tempted for the entire forty days. What follows is an account of one aspect of that temptation.

2. (Luk_4:2-4) The first temptation: transform stone into bread for personal needs.

And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

a. **He was hungry:** To tempt a man with food, who has been fasting for forty days seems almost unfair; yet the Father allowed it because He knew Jesus could handle it. God will never allow us to be tempted beyond our ability to resist (1Co_10:13).

i. The fact that Dr. Luke points out that **afterward . . . He was hungry** is important. After such a long fast, renewed hunger probably points to a critical need for food. Jesus is beginning to starve to death.

ii. Jesus is hungry, but full of the Spirit. We are sometimes just the opposite - full stomachs and empty spirits.

b. **If You are the Son of God:** This could be more accurately translated *since You are the Son of God*.

Satan isn't expressing doubt about Jesus' identity. Instead, He challenges Jesus to display His identity.

i. The temptation was basically this: "Since You're the Messiah, why are You so deprived? Do a little something for Yourself." The same temptation comes to us: "If you're a

child of God, why are things so tough? Do a little something for yourself.”

c. **Command this stone to become bread:** Satan entices Jesus to use the power of God for selfish purposes. The temptation to eat something inappropriate worked well with the first sinless man (Gen_3:6), so why not try it on the second sinless man?

i. By this, we also see how temptation often works.

o Satan appeals to a *legitimate* desire within Jesus (the desire to eat and survive).

o Satan suggests that Jesus fulfill this legitimate desire in an illegitimate way.

Often, this is the essence of temptation.

d. **But Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’”** Jesus countered Satan’s suggestion with Scripture (Deu_8:3). What Satan said made sense - “Why starve yourself to death?” But what **is written** makes even more sense. Jesus reminded Satan of Biblical truth, that **every word of God** is more important than the very bread we eat.

i. Jesus used *Scripture* to battle Satan’s temptation, not some elaborate spiritual power inaccessible to us. Jesus fought this battle as a man in this battle, and He drew on no “special resources” unavailable to us.

ii. We effectively resist temptation in the same way Jesus did: by countering Satan’s seductive lies by shining the light of God’s truth upon them. If we are ignorant of God’s truth, we are poorly armed in the fight against temptation.

3. (Luk_4:5-8) The second temptation: all the kingdoms of this world in exchange for a moment of worship.

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.” And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get

behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

a. **All the kingdoms of the world . . . All this authority I will give to You, and their glory:** Satan knew Jesus had come to win **the kingdoms of the world**. This was an invitation to win back the earth without going to the cross. Satan would simply **give** it to Jesus, if Jesus would **worship before** the devil.

i. **For this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish:** Satan claims that authority over the earth's kingdoms was **delivered** to him, and Jesus never challenges the statement. Who **delivered** it over to Satan and when? In Genesis 1, God gave man dominion over the earth, and Adam and his descendants have forfeited it over to Satan.

ii. Satan is *the ruler of this world* (Joh_12:31) and *the prince of the power of the air* (Eph_2:2) by the popular election of mankind since the days of Adam.

iii. Since Satan possesses the glory of the kingdoms of this world, and can **give it to whomever I wish**, it should not surprise us to see the ungodly in positions of power and prestige.

b. **If You will worship before me, all will be Yours:** The Father's plan for Jesus was for Him to suffer first, then enter His glory (Luk_24:25-26). Satan offered Jesus a way out of the suffering.

i. One day, it will be said that *The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever* (Rev_11:15). Satan offered this to Jesus now, before the agony of the cross.

ii. If Jesus accepted this, our salvation would be impossible. He might have gained some sort of "authority" to rule, but He could not redeem individual sinners through His sacrifice.

c. **And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan!"** Satan brought a powerful temptation to Jesus,

and Jesus *resisted* the influence of Satan, first by saying, **“Get behind Me, Satan!”**

In this, Jesus fulfilled the exhortation that would later come in Jam_4:7 : *Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

d. **For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.”** For the second time, Jesus counters Satan’s deception with Biblical truth, quoting from Deu_6:13. There might have seemed to be an advantage in Jesus avoiding the cross, but Jesus affirms to Himself and reminds Satan that the command to **worship the Lord your God** and serve **Him only** is far above any supposed advantage in bowing to Satan.

i. Again, Jesus answers Satan with the same resource that is available to us: the Word of God used by a Spirit-filled believer. In resisting these temptations as a man, Jesus proved that Adam did not *have* to sin; there was not something faulty in his make up. Jesus faced worse than Adam did and Jesus never sinned.

4. (Luk_4:9-13) The third temptation: testing God through signs and wonders.

Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’” And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’” Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

a. **Set Him on the pinnacle of the temple:** Satan took Jesus to a prominent, high place. From this wall surrounding the temple mount, it was hundreds of feet to the rocky valley floor below. If Jesus followed Satan’s request to **throw Yourself down from here**, it would be a spectacular event.

i. The ancient Jewish document *Pesiqta Rabbati* (162a) records a traditional belief that the Messiah would show Himself to Israel standing on the roof of the temple. If Jesus did what Satan suggested, it would fulfill the Messianic expectation of His day.

b. **Throw Yourself down from here:** Satan could not himself throw Jesus off the pinnacle of the temple. He could do no more than suggest, so he must ask Jesus to throw *Himself* down.

c. **For it is written: “He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you”** : This time, the Devil knows and quotes Scripture in his temptation (Psa_91:11-12). “Go ahead, Jesus; if You do this the Bible promises angels will rescue You, and it will be spectacular self-promotion.”

i. When Satan says, **“For it is written”** it reminds us that Satan is a Bible expert and knows how to twist Scriptures out of their context. The sad truth is that many people today will accept anyone who quotes a Bible verse as teaching God’s truth, but the mere use of Bible words does not necessarily convey the will of God.

ii. Some suggest that Satan is such a Bible expert because he looks for loopholes!

d. **And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’”** Jesus answered Satan’s misuse of Scripture with the proper use of the Bible, quoting from Deu_6:16. As Jesus rejects Satan’s twisting of Scripture, He rightly divides the word of truth, understanding it in its context.

i. Jesus understood from His knowledge of the *whole counsel of God* (Act_20:27) that Satan was “twisting” this passage from Psalms 91. Jesus knew how to rightly divide the word of truth (2Ti_2:15).

ii. Jesus understood that Satan enticed Him to take a step of “faith” that would actually test (**tempt**) God in an ungodly way. “The temptation may have been to perform a spectacular, but pointless miracle in order to compel wonder

and belief of a kind.” (Morris) e. **Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time:** When Satan saw that he couldn’t get anywhere, he left for a while. The devil will always seek to come back at an **opportune time**, so we should never give him the opportunity.

i. Satan is not stupid; he will not continually put his limited resources into an ineffective battle. If you want Satan to leave you alone for a while, you must continually resist him.

Many are *so attacked* because they resist *so little*.

ii. Jesus resisted these temptations because He was walking in the Word and in the Holy Spirit. These two give the believer full resource for victory. Too much Word and not enough Spirit and you *puff up* (in the sense of pride). Too much Spirit and not enough Word and you *blow up*. With the Word and the Spirit together, you *grow up*.

B. Jesus is rejected at Nazareth.

1. (Luk_4:14-15) The early Galilean ministry.

Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.

And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

a. **Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit:** Jesus comes forth from His time of testing stronger than ever. Though He was already filled with the Spirit (Luk_4:1), He continues to walk in the Spirit - and **in the power of the Spirit** - after experiencing victory over temptation.

i. “He who, through the grace of God, resists and overcomes temptation, is always *bettered* by it. This is one of the wonders of God’s grace, that those very things which are designed for our utter ruin he makes the instruments of our greatest good. Thus Satan is ever duped by his own proceeding, and caught in his own craft.” (Clarke)

b. **To Galilee . . . the surrounding region:** The **region of Galilee** was a fertile, progressive, highly populated region. According to figures from the Jewish historian Josephus,

there were some 3 million people populating Galilee, an area smaller than the state of Connecticut.

c. **He taught in their synagogues:** Jesus' focus in ministry was teaching, and at this early point in His ministry He had no organized opposition (**being glorified by all**).

2. (Luk_4:16-17) Jesus comes to His own synagogue in Nazareth.

So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

a. **And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day:** Jesus made it **His custom** to get together with God's people for worship and the Word of God. If anyone didn't need to "go to church," it was Jesus - yet, it was **His custom** to do so.

b. **And stood up to read:** The usual order of service in a synagogue began with an opening prayer and praise; then a reading from the Law; then a reading from the prophets and a sermon, perhaps from a learned visitor. On this occasion Jesus was the "learned visitor." Since this synagogue was in **Nazareth**, Jesus would have attended it often before, and now He will **read** and teach in His hometown synagogue.

3. (Luk_4:18-19) Jesus reads from Isa_61:1-2.

"The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to *the* poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to *the* captives and recovery of sight to *the* blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

a. **The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me:** The one speaking in this Isaiah passage is the Anointed One; the Messiah, the Christ.

i. **Anointed Me:** The word "anoint" means *to rub or sprinkle on; apply an unguent, ointment, or oily liquid to*. Persons in the Old Testament were often literally anointed with oil. For

example, priests were anointed for their special service to the Lord (Exo_28:41).

Literal oil would be applied, but as a sign of the Holy Spirit upon their lives and service. The oil on the head was only the outward representation of the real, spiritual work going on inside them.

b. **He has anointed Me to:** In this prophecy, the Messiah announces that He is here to heal the fivefold damage that sin brings. Sin has done great damage, so there needs to be a great work of redemption.

o **To preach the gospel to the poor:** Sin impoverishes, and the Messiah will bring good news to the **poor**.

o **To heal the brokenhearted:** Sin breaks hearts, and the Messiah has good news for **brokenhearted**.

o **To proclaim liberty to the captives:** Sin makes people captive and enslaves them, and the Messiah has come to set them free.

o **Recovery of sight to the blind:** Sin blinds us, and the Messiah has come to heal our spiritual and moral blindness.

o **To set at liberty those who are oppressed:** Sin oppresses its victims, and the Messiah comes to bring **liberty** to the **oppressed**.

i. Thankfully, Jesus didn't come to only *preach* deliverance or even to only *bring* deliverance.

Jesus came to *be* deliverance for us.

c. Where Jesus *stopped* reading from Isaiah helps show us the nature of prophecy and its relation to time.

The passage goes on to describe what Jesus would do at His *second coming* (*and the day of vengeance of our God*); this is a 2,000 year old comma.

4. (Luk_4:20-27) Jesus teaches on Isa_61:1-2.

Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which

proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?" He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'" Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, *in the region* of Sidon, to a woman *who was* a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

a. **And sat down:** As Jesus sat, He prepared to teach instead of returning to His seat among the congregation. Everyone was wondering how He would explain what He had just read.

b. **Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing:** In this, Jesus answers two questions. "Who did Isaiah write of?" Jesus answered that question, "Isaiah wrote of Me." "When will this come to pass?" Jesus answered that question, "Isaiah wrote of now."

c. **Marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth:** Literally, the people said that Jesus' words were *full of grace*. They sensed the goodness and grace of God in the announcement that the ministry of the Messiah is now here.

d. **Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country:** The audience was impressed that a hometown boy could teach so well, but they also wanted Jesus to prove His claims with miraculous signs.

i. At this point in the ministry of Jesus, He has already done miracles unrecorded by Luke (such as in John 1-4). But Jesus never performed a miracle *only* for the sake of a sign.

e. Jesus' audience wanted special favors because He was in His hometown. Jesus points out that this doesn't matter to

God, using Elijah's and Elisha's miracles as examples, because they were done among Gentiles.

i. Jesus makes two points. First, the fact that they don't receive Jesus has nothing to do with Jesus, but everything to do with them. He is truly from God, but they won't receive Him.

Their rejection says more about them than Jesus.

ii. Second, it shows that God's miraculous power operates in unexpected and sovereign ways.

People that we often consider undeserving and off the wall are many times recipients of God's miraculous power.

5. (Luk_4:28-30) Jesus walks away from a murderous mob.

So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.

Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

a. **When they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city:**

This is quite a response to a sermon. These people were angry that there was something wrong with them, that their request for a miracle was denied, and that Jesus implied that God loved the Gentiles too.

i. Obviously, Jesus is not being truly seeker-sensitive here. Some today might say that He needed help in tailoring His message so that it would be easier and more enjoyable to hear.

ii. Their violent reaction is like the pastor who said of his church: "I've got 100 active members. 50 are active for me, and 50 are active against me."

b. **That they might throw Him down over the cliff:**

Pushing someone off a small cliff was often the first step in the process of stoning. Once the victim fell down, they were pelted with rocks until dead.

c. **Passing through the midst of them:** They wanted a miracle, and Jesus did an unexpected one right in front of them, escaping miraculously.

i. In this situation, Jesus could have backed off the cliff and been rescued by angels - as Satan suggested in the third temptation. Instead, Jesus chose a more “normal miracle,” if there is such a thing.

C. Further ministry in Galilee.

1. (Luk_4:31-37) Casting out an unclean spirit.

Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority. Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Let *us* alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are; the Holy One of God!” But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him in *their* midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, “What a word this *is!* For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.” And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

a. **There was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon:** The terms **unclean spirit**, *evil spirit*, and **demon** all seem to be the same, referring to malevolent powers of darkness who are the enemies of God and man.

b. **What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth?** It is ironic that the demons know who Jesus is, but the chosen people - people in His own city, didn’t appreciate who Jesus was.

c. **But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!”** The manner of Jesus’ dealings with the demon in this passage is a clear demonstration of His power and authority over the spirit realm.

2. (Luk_4:38-39) Peter's mother-in-law is healed of a fever. Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.

a. **Simon's wife's mother:** This proves beyond any doubt that Peter was married. According to the present day Roman Catholic standards for the priesthood, Peter was not qualified to be a priest - much less the first "Pope"!

i. Clement of Alexandria, an early Christian writer, said that Peter's wife helped him in ministry by meeting the needs of other women.

b. **He stood over her and rebuked the fever:** In this situation, Jesus saw the fever itself as something to be rebuked. Perhaps He perceived that there was some spiritual dynamic behind this seemingly natural illness.

c. **And it left her:** This was not only the healing of a disease, but the immediate granting of strength. One doesn't normally go from a high fever to serving others.

3. (Luk_4:40-41) Jesus heals many who are sick and demon possessed.

When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!" And He, rebuking *them*, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

a. **When the sun was setting:** This marked the start of a new day, the day after the Sabbath (Luk_4:31).

The people had to wait until the Sabbath was over until they came to Jesus. Religious tradition kept them from receiving from God at the moment.

b. **Did not allow them to speak:** Jesus restrained the demons from speaking about Him because He did not want

their testimony to be relied upon.

c. Was demon possession more common in Jesus' day than our own? Actually, there are fewer than ten specific individuals delivered from demon possession, plus two general occasions where it describes people being delivered. This doesn't seem abnormally high over a period of three years, among three million people.

4. (Luk_4:42-44) Jesus continues His preaching ministry in Galilee.

Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent." And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

a. **Went into a deserted place:** Jesus knew the value of solitude with God the Father. He spent most of His time ministering among the people, but needed such times in **a deserted place**.

b. **I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also:** He taught about the **kingdom of God**, in the sense that He announced the presence of the King and in correcting people's misconceptions about the kingdom.

c. **For this purpose I have been sent:** Jesus saw His main ministry, at this point, to be **preaching the kingdom**. Miracles were a part, but not the main focus of His ministry.

(Luk 4:2) where for forty days he endured temptations⁶ from the devil. He⁷ ate nothing⁸ during those days, and when they were completed,⁹ he was famished.

(Luk 4:3) The devil said to him, "If¹⁰ you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."¹¹

(Luk 4:4) Jesus answered him, "It is written, ' **Man 12 does not live by bread alone.**' "¹³

(Luk 4:5) Then¹⁴ the devil¹⁵ led him up¹⁶ to a high place¹⁷ and showed him in a flash all the kingdoms of the world.

(Luk 4:6) And he¹⁸ said to him, "To you¹⁹ I will grant this whole realm²⁰ — and the glory that goes along with it,²¹ for it has been relinquished²² to me, and I can give it to anyone I wish.

(Luk 4:7) So then, if²³ you will worship²⁴ me, all this will be²⁵ yours."

(Luk 4:8) Jesus²⁶ answered him,²⁷ "It is written, ' **You are to worship ²⁸ the Lord ²⁹ your God and serve only him.**' "³⁰

(Luk 4:9) Then³¹ the devil³² brought him to Jerusalem,³³ had him stand³⁴ on the highest point of the temple,³⁵ and said to him, "If³⁶

you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here,

(Luk 4:10) for it is written, ' **He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,**'³⁷

(Luk 4:11) and ' **with their hands they will lift you up, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.**' "³⁸

(Luk 4:12) Jesus³⁹ answered him,⁴⁰ "It is said, ' **You are not to put the Lord your God to the test.**' "⁴¹

(Luk 4:13) So⁴² when the devil⁴³ had completed every temptation, he departed from him until a more opportune time.⁴⁴

(Luk 4:14) **The Beginning of Jesus' Ministry in Galilee**

Then⁴⁵ Jesus, in the power of the Spirit,⁴⁶ returned to Galilee, and news about him spread⁴⁷ throughout the surrounding countryside.⁴⁸

(Luk 4:15) He⁴⁹ began to teach⁵⁰ in their synagogues⁵¹ and was praised⁵² by all.

(Luk 4:16) **Rejection at Nazareth**

Now⁵³ Jesus⁵⁴ came to Nazareth,⁵⁵ where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue⁵⁶ on the Sabbath day, as was his custom.⁵⁷ He⁵⁸ stood up to read,⁵⁹

(Luk 4:17) and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He⁶⁰ unrolled⁶¹ the scroll and found the place where it was written, (Luk 4:18) " ***The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,***

because he has anointed ⁶² me to proclaim good news ⁶³ to the poor. ⁶⁴

He has sent me ⁶⁵ to proclaim release ⁶⁶ to the captives

and the regaining of sight ⁶⁷ to the blind, to set free ⁶⁸ those who are oppressed, ⁶⁹

(Luk 4:19) ***to proclaim the year ⁷⁰ of the Lord's favor.***
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(Luk 4:20) Then⁷² he rolled up⁷³ the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on⁷⁴ him.

(Luk 4:21) Then⁷⁵ he began to tell them, "Today⁷⁶ this scripture has been fulfilled even as you heard it being read."⁷⁷

(Luk 4:22) All⁷⁸ were speaking well of him, and were amazed at the gracious words coming out of his mouth. They⁷⁹ said, "Isn't this⁸⁰ Joseph's son?"

(Luk 4:23) Jesus⁸¹ said to them, "No doubt you will quote to me the proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself!'⁸² and say, 'What we have heard that you did in Capernaum,⁸³ do here in your hometown too.' "

(Luk 4:24) And he added,⁸⁴ "I tell you the truth,⁸⁵ no prophet is acceptable⁸⁶ in his hometown.

(Luk 4:25) But in truth I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's days,⁸⁷ when the sky⁸⁸ was shut up three and a half years, and⁸⁹ there was a great famine over all the land.

(Luk 4:26) Yet⁹⁰ Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to a woman who was a widow at Zarephath in Sidon.⁹¹

(Luk 4:27) And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha,⁹² yet⁹³ none of them was cleansed

except Naaman the Syrian."⁹⁴

(Luk 4:28) When they heard this, all the people⁹⁵ in the synagogue were filled with rage.

(Luk 4:29) They got up, forced⁹⁶ him out of the town,⁹⁷ and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that⁹⁸

they could throw him down the cliff.⁹⁹

(Luk 4:30) But he passed through the crowd¹⁰⁰ and went on his way.¹⁰¹

(Luk 4:31) ***Ministry in Capernaum***

So¹⁰² he went down to Capernaum,¹⁰³ a town¹⁰⁴ in Galilee, and on the Sabbath he began to teach the people.¹⁰⁵

(Luk 4:32) They¹⁰⁶ were amazed¹⁰⁷ at his teaching, because he spoke¹⁰⁸ with authority.¹⁰⁹

(Luk 4:33) Now¹¹⁰ in the synagogue¹¹¹ there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean¹¹² demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, (Luk 4:34) "Ha! Leave us alone,¹¹³ Jesus the Nazarene! Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are — the Holy One¹¹⁴ of God."

(Luk 4:35) But¹¹⁵ Jesus rebuked him:¹¹⁶ "Silence! Come out of him!"¹¹⁷ Then, after the demon threw the man¹¹⁸ down in their midst, he came out of him without hurting him.¹¹⁹

(Luk 4:36) They¹²⁰ were all amazed and began to say¹²¹ to one another, "What's happening here?¹²² For with authority and power¹²³

he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!"

(Luk 4:37) So¹²⁴ the news¹²⁵ about him spread into all areas of the region.¹²⁶

(Luk 4:38) After Jesus left¹²⁷ the synagogue, he entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus¹²⁸ to help her.¹²⁹

(Luk 4:39) So¹³⁰ he stood over her, commanded¹³¹ the fever, and it left her. Immediately¹³² she got up and began

to serve¹³³ them.

(Luk 4:40) As the sun was setting, all those who had any relatives¹³⁴ sick with various diseases brought them to Jesus.¹³⁵ He placed¹³⁶

his hands on every one of them and healed them.

(Luk 4:41) Demons also came out¹³⁷ of many, crying out,¹³⁸ "You are the Son of God!"¹³⁹ But he rebuked¹⁴⁰ them, and would not allow them to speak,¹⁴¹ because they knew that he was the Christ.¹⁴²

(Luk 4:42) The next morning¹⁴³ Jesus¹⁴⁴ departed and went to a deserted place. Yet¹⁴⁵ the crowds were seeking him, and they came to him and tried to keep him from leaving them.

(Luk 4:43) But Jesus¹⁴⁶ said to them, "I must¹⁴⁷ proclaim the good news of the kingdom¹⁴⁸ of God to the other towns¹⁴⁹ too, for that is what I was sent¹⁵⁰ to do."¹⁵¹

(Luk 4:44) So¹⁵² he continued to preach in the synagogues of Judea.¹⁵³

(Luk 5:1) ***The Call of the Disciples***

Now¹ Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,² and the crowd was pressing around him³ to hear the word of God.

(Guzik)

Luk 5:1-39

Luke 5 - DISCIPLES ARE CALLED

A. The call of four fishermen.

1. (Luk_5:1-3) Jesus teaches from a boat.

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

a. **The multitude pressed around Him to hear the word of God:** The large crowd is testimony to the increasing popularity of Jesus as a teacher. The crowd was so big that Jesus **got into one of the boats** and **taught the multitudes from the boat**.

b. **One of the boats, which was Simon's:** Simon must have felt privileged to have Jesus teach from his boat. We can also be sure that Simon listened to this teaching all the more attentively.

2. (Luk_5:4-7) The miraculous catch of fish.

When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

a. **He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets:** Peter (**Simon**) was kind enough to allow Jesus to use his boat. Jesus is kind enough to direct Peter's fishing efforts. We can never give more to Jesus than He will give to us.

b. **Master, we have toiled all night:** The particular ancient Greek word Luke used for **Master** is unique to Luke's Gospel. The word has the ideas "commander," "leader," or perhaps even "boss." With this title, Peter shows he is willing to take orders from Jesus.

c. **We have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net:** Peter could have come up with any number of possible excuses.

- o "I worked all night and I'm tired."

- o "I know a lot more about fishing than some carpenter."

- o "The best fishing is at night, not in the day time."

o “All these crowds and loud teaching has scared the fish away.”

o “We already washed our nets.”

o “Jesus may know religion but He doesn’t know fishing.”

d. **They caught a great number of fish:** Peter *didn’t* make such excuses, and His faith in Jesus was well rewarded. Peter understood that he probably knew more about fishing than a carpenter did and that he had worked all night without any results. The only reason why Peter did what Jesus asked was because *he believed in Jesus*, not because the circumstances seemed right.

i. It makes all the difference in the world when our work is directed by Jesus. We can work -

even work hard - for a long time with no results. But when Jesus directs our work, we see results.

ii. How many harvests do we miss out on because we make excuses instead of doing what Jesus said?

iii. The story shows us that the worst excuse for not doing what God wants you to do is because you’ve been a failure in the past. Peter had fished all night with no results, but was instantly blessed when the Lord directed His work.

e. **So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them:** Peter had to work with others to get the job done. “Some will rather leave souls to perish than admit of *partners* in the sacred work. It is an intolerable pride to think nothing done well but what we do ourselves; and a diabolic envy to be afraid lest others should be more successful than we are.” (Clarke)

3. (Luk_5:8-11) Peter’s reaction and the call of four disciples. When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also *were* James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. From now on you

will catch men.” So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

a. **He fell down at Jesus’ knees:** This was a dramatic gesture, but we should not think that this was not the first time these men met Jesus. This was the time when they made a full-time commitment to following after Jesus.

b. **Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord:** When Peter saw the great power of Jesus - displayed in Jesus’ knowledge in an area where He should have no knowledge - it made Peter realize his own spiritual bankruptcy compared to Jesus.

i. Because Peter was such an experienced fisherman, and because he knew how unfavorable the conditions were, he knew all the more what a great miracle this was.

c. **Do not be afraid:** In the grammar of the ancient Greek, this is literally *stop being fearful*; it calms an existing fear. Peter was afraid of Jesus in the sense of holding Him in such great awe, but Jesus tells Him to put away that fear. God wants to relate to us on the principle of love, not the principle of a cowering fear.

d. **From now on you will catch men:** Clarke says that the word **catch** signifies to catch something alive. That is true evangelism; it isn’t to bring dead people into a building, but to bring real life.

e. **They forsook all and followed Him:** The catch itself was not as important as what it showed them about Jesus. It showed them that He was much more than any carpenter, and this caused them to follow Jesus.

f. **They forsook all and followed Him:** Jesus chose unlearned, unlettered men, but He taught them. You don’t need fancy degrees and education to start out in ministry, but you must enroll yourself in the University of the Word.

i. These four (as well as Moses, David, Gideon, Matthew, and Paul, among others) were called while already at work. God’s call usually comes while we are busy.

B. Jesus heals a leper.

1. The Messiah's ministry as a healer was prophesied: *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.* (Isa_35:5-6)

a. Also, the presence of so much sickness and disease among Israel betrays their lack of obedience to the Sinai Covenant and their current low spiritual state. God promised that such curses would come upon them if they were disobedient to His covenant (Deuteronomy 28).

2. (Luk_5:12) The leper begs Jesus for help.

And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on *his* face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

a. **A man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus:** The condition of leprosy is a model of sin and its effects.

Just like sin it is a contagious, debilitating disease that corrupts a man and makes him essentially dead while alive.

i. Lepers were universally scorned by society and religion; they were especially despised by the Rabbis, who saw their state as the particular judgment of God.

ii. In Jesus' time rabbis spoke about how badly they would treat lepers. One boasted that he refused to buy even an egg on a street where he saw a leper, another bragged that he threw rocks at lepers when he saw them.

b. **Lord, if You are willing:** The leper has no doubt whatsoever about the *ability* of Jesus to heal. His only question is if Jesus is **willing** to heal.

i. In addition, this is the first place in the gospel where Jesus is called **Lord**. This term was particularly meaningful in light of the fact that the word **Lord** was used to translate the Hebrew word for *Yahweh*.

c. **Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean:** This leper wants more than healing. He wants *cleansing*, not

only from the leprosy, but from all its debilitating effects on his life and soul.

3. (Luk_5:13) Jesus touches the leper and he is cleansed.

Then He put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him.

a. **I am willing:** Jesus' assurance that **I am willing** simply answers the man's question, and gives us a starting point for the times we wonder if Jesus is willing to heal. We should assume Jesus is willing to heal, unless He shows us differently.

i. How can we know if Jesus is willing to heal us? By assuming that He is, and by listening to His if He would want to tell us differently. This is how it happened with the Apostle Paul in 2Co_12:7-10.

b. **He put out His hand and touched him:** This is a bold and compassionate touch from Jesus. It was against the ceremonial law to touch a leper, which made the touch all the more meaningful to the afflicted man. Of course, as soon as Jesus touched him, he was no longer a leper!

i. Jesus often varied the *manner* of healing, and usually He chose a particular manner that would be meaningful to the afflicted individual.

4. (Luk_5:14) Jesus commands the healed man to give testimony of his healing to the priests only.

And He charged him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded."

a. **He charged him to tell no one:** Why did Jesus often command people to be somewhat secretive about their healing? His desire was to keep down the crowds until the proper time for His formal revelation to Israel, which was an exact date as prophesied in Daniel 9.

i. In addition, Jesus' miracles (though they did give testimony to His ministry) were not primarily calculated to

make Him famous or a celebrity. Jesus healed to meet the needs of specific individuals.

b. **But go and show yourself to the priest:** Jesus does command the man to give **a testimony** to the priests, and what a testimony this was! The Mosaic Law prescribed specific sacrifices to be conducted upon the healing of a leper, and the priests had to “blow the dust” off that portion of their law (Leviticus 14).

5. (Luk_5:15-16) Jesus fame as a healer increases.

However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. So He Himself *often* withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

a. **Great multitudes came together to hear . . . so He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed:** Jesus never cultivated a following as a healer, so when the crowds started coming for mostly that reason, He made it a special point to withdraw into the wilderness for prayer. The demands of life pushed Jesus to prayer, not from it.

C. Jesus’ power to forgive and heal.

1. (Luk_5:17-19) Jesus’ teaching is interrupted.

Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them. Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with *his* bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.

a. **And the power of the Lord was present to heal them:** On this day, Jesus taught an audience of religious leaders and common people, but Jesus was there as far more than a teacher - **the power of the Lord was present to**

heal them. The power of God is here to more than instruct us, it is to here to directly touch and change our lives.

i. Wasn't the power of the Lord *always* **present to heal**? Yes, but there are times when God pours out special blessings in such areas. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the **power of the Lord was present to heal them** after Jesus *withdrew into the wilderness and prayed* (Luk_5:16).

b. **There were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by:** The **Pharisees** were devoted and zealous, but for them religion consisted in an exact outward obedience to the law, and they believed that God only loved those that did as they did.

i. *Pharisee* meant "*separated one*." They separated themselves from everything they thought was unholy, and they thought everyone was separated from the love of God, except themselves.

c. **They went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus:** The effort the friends of the paralyzed man go to in order to bring him to Jesus certainly shows determination and a confidence in Jesus. They certainly didn't want to pull him back up to the roof.

2. (Luk_5:20-22) Jesus declares the paralyzed man's sins forgiven.

When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?"

a. **Man, your sins are forgiven you:** When he forgave the paralytic, Jesus was not saying that the man was especially sinful, or that his paralysis was directly caused by sin; rather He was addressing the man's greatest need, and the common root of all pain and suffering.

b. **Who can forgive sins but God alone?** There was no error in the thinking of the scribes and Pharisees. It is true that only God can forgive sins. Their error was in failing to see that God was right there among them in the person of Jesus.

i. This reminds us that only God can solve our sin problem. We can't even forgive ourselves, because we don't have the power and authority to forgive ourselves. We must be persuaded of God's forgiveness in our lives.

3. (Luk_5:23-26) Jesus demonstrates the power and authority of God alone.

"Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"; He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!"

a. **Which is easier to say:** With man, both forgiveness and miraculous healing are impossible, but with God they are easy. Jesus demonstrated He has the power to do the invisible (forgive a man's sins) by doing something miraculous that they could see (healing his paralysis).

D. The call of Levi (Matthew).

1. (Luk_5:27-28) A tax collector is called to follow Jesus.

After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.

a. **He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi:** So far, Jesus has handled a paralytic, a leper, and a demoniac. Now He is ready for the worst of the group - **a tax collector**.

b. Tax collectors were despised as traitors and extortioners. As a class they were excommunicated from the Jewish faith.

c. **He left all:** “This must have meant a considerable sacrifice, for tax collectors were normally wealthy. Matthew must have been the richest of the apostles.” (Morris)

2. (Luk_5:29-32) Jesus is accused of associating with sinners. Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, “Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” Jesus answered and said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

a. **Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house:** Though it was great sacrifice for Matthew, and there was no turning back (fishing would be much easier to take up again than tax collecting), he wasn’t sad.

He threw a party instead.

i. One reason Matthew threw the party is because he wanted his friends to meet Jesus. A saved man doesn’t want to go to heaven alone.

b. **And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples:** The accusation comes indirectly against Jesus, through His disciples. People attack Jesus in the same way today, through His disciples.

c. **Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick:** Jesus’ answer shows us what kind of people are really willing to come to Him as Savior - those who recognize their own need for salvation.

i. Some people think they will come to Jesus for a little bit of cosmetic surgery. They don’t think they are *sick* but they think they could use a little *improvement*. Jesus, the Great Physician, only admits patients who see themselves are truly sick and in need of a doctor.

ii. The church is the only group in the world where you *have* to be unqualified before you can join.

3. (Luk_5:33-39) Jesus declares that under Him, things are different.

Then they said to Him, “Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?” And He said to them, “Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days.” Then He spoke a parable to them: “No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was *taken* out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old *wine*, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’”

a. **Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them?** Jesus answered their question with an allusion to the wedding practices of His day. A wedding feast was the most vivid picture of joy and happiness in that culture. During the weeklong wedding feast it was understood that joy was more important than conformity to religious rituals. If any ceremonial observance would detract from the joy of a wedding feast, it was not required. Jesus says that His followers should have this kind of happiness.

i. Basically, they thought Jesus was too happy. When was the last time you were accused of being too cheerful or too happy?

b. **No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one:** “Patching up an old garment with a piece of a new garment not only disfigures the new garment, but also causes the old garment to become more ragged than ever, for the new piece has still to shrink and will then pull the old threadbare garment to pieces. Just as fatal will it be to adapt

the principles of Jesus to the old systems.” (Geldenhuys) c. **But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved:** Jesus’ point is clear.

You can’t fit His new life into the old forms. This explains why Jesus did not begin a reform movement within Judaism, working with the rabbinical schools and such. Jesus says, “I haven’t come to patch up your old practices. I come with a whole new set of clothes.”

d. **And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, “The old is better”** : Just because people are more comfortable with the old, they assume that it is better. The epitaph on the tombstone of many a dead church reads: “We never did it that way before.”

(Luk 5:2) He⁴ saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets.

(Luk 5:3) He got into⁵ one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then⁶ Jesus⁷ sat down⁸ and taught the crowds from the boat.

(Luk 5:4) When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and lower⁹ your nets for a catch."

(Luk 5:5) Simon¹⁰ answered,¹¹ "Master,¹² we worked hard all night and caught nothing! But at your word¹³ I will lower¹⁴ the nets."

(Luk 5:6) When¹⁵ they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets started to tear.¹⁶

(Luk 5:7) So¹⁷ they motioned¹⁸ to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they were about to sink.¹⁹

(Luk 5:8) But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord,²⁰ for I am a sinful man!"²¹

(Luk 5:9) For²² Peter²³ and all who were with him were astonished²⁴ at the catch of fish that they had taken, (Luk 5:10) and so were James and John, Zebedee's sons, who

were Simon's business partners.²⁵ Then²⁶ Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on²⁷ you will be catching people."²⁸

(Luk 5:11) So²⁹ when they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed³⁰ him.

(Luk 5:12) ***Healing a Leper***

While³¹ Jesus³² was in one of the towns,³³ a man came³⁴ to him who was covered with³⁵ leprosy.³⁶ When³⁷ he saw Jesus, he bowed down with his face to the ground³⁸ and begged him,³⁹ "Lord, if⁴⁰ you are willing, you can make me clean."

(Luk 5:13) So⁴¹ he stretched out his hand and touched⁴² him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him.

(Luk 5:14) Then⁴³ he ordered the man⁴⁴ to tell no one,⁴⁵ but commanded him,⁴⁶ "Go⁴⁷ and show yourself to a priest, and bring the offering⁴⁸ for your cleansing, as Moses commanded,⁴⁹ as a testimony to them."⁵⁰

(Luk 5:15) But the news about him spread even more,⁵¹ and large crowds were gathering together to hear him⁵² and to be healed of their illnesses.

(Luk 5:16) Yet Jesus himself⁵³ frequently withdrew⁵⁴ to the wilderness⁵⁵ and prayed.

(Luk 5:17) ***Healing and Forgiving a Paralytic***

Now on⁵⁶ one of those days, while he was teaching, there were Pharisees⁵⁷ and teachers of the law⁵⁸ sitting nearby (who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem),⁵⁹ and the power of the Lord was with him⁶⁰ to heal.

(Luk 5:18) Just then⁶¹ some men showed up, carrying a paralyzed man⁶² on a stretcher.⁶³ They⁶⁴ were trying to bring him in and place him before Jesus.⁶⁵

(Luk 5:19) But⁶⁶ since they found⁶⁷ no way to carry him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof⁶⁸ and let

him down on the stretcher⁶⁹ through the roof tiles⁷⁰ right⁷¹ in front of Jesus.⁷²

(Luk 5:20) When⁷³ Jesus⁷⁴ saw their⁷⁵ faith he said, "Friend,⁷⁶ your sins are forgiven."⁷⁷

(Luk 5:21) Then⁷⁸ the experts in the law⁷⁹ and the Pharisees began to think⁸⁰ to themselves,⁸¹ "Who is this man⁸² who is uttering blasphemies?⁸³ Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

(Luk 5:22) When Jesus perceived⁸⁴ their hostile thoughts,⁸⁵ he said to them,⁸⁶ "Why are you raising objections⁸⁷ within yourselves?"

(Luk 5:23) Which is easier,⁸⁸ to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'?

(Luk 5:24) But so that you may know⁸⁹ that the Son of Man⁹⁰ has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he said to the paralyzed man⁹¹

— "I tell you, stand up, take your stretcher⁹² and go home."⁹³

(Luk 5:25) Immediately⁹⁴ he stood up before them, picked⁹⁵ up the stretcher⁹⁶ he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying⁹⁷ God.

(Luk 5:26) Then⁹⁸ astonishment⁹⁹ seized them all, and they glorified¹⁰⁰ God. They were filled with awe,¹⁰¹ saying, "We have seen incredible¹⁰² things¹⁰³ today."¹⁰⁴

(Luk 5:27) ***The Call of Levi; Eating with Sinners***

After¹⁰⁵ this, Jesus¹⁰⁶ went out and saw a tax collector¹⁰⁷ named Levi¹⁰⁸ sitting at the tax booth.¹⁰⁹ "Follow me,"¹¹⁰ he said to him.

(Luk 5:28) And he got up and followed him, leaving everything¹¹¹ behind.¹¹²

(Luk 5:29) Then¹¹³ Levi gave a great banquet¹¹⁴ in his house for Jesus,¹¹⁵ and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others sitting¹¹⁶ at the table with them.

(Luk 5:30) But¹¹⁷ the Pharisees¹¹⁸ and their experts in the law¹¹⁹ complained¹²⁰ to his disciples, saying, "Why do you

eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"¹²¹

(Luk 5:31) Jesus¹²² answered them, "Those who are well don't need a physician, but those who are sick do."¹²³

(Luk 5:32) I have not come¹²⁴ to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."¹²⁵

(Luk 5:33) ***The Superiority of the New***

Then¹²⁶ they said to him, "John's¹²⁷ disciples frequently fast¹²⁸ and pray,¹²⁹ and so do the disciples of the Pharisees,¹³⁰ but yours continue to eat and drink."¹³¹

(Luk 5:34) So¹³² Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the wedding guests¹³³ fast while the bridegroom¹³⁴ is with them, can you?"¹³⁵

(Luk 5:35) But those days are coming, and when the bridegroom is taken from them,¹³⁶ at that time¹³⁷ they will fast."

(Luk 5:36) He also told them a parable:¹³⁸ "No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews¹³⁹ it on an old garment. If he does, he will have torn¹⁴⁰ the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old."¹⁴¹

(Luk 5:37) And no one pours new wine into old wineskins.¹⁴² If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.

(Luk 5:38) Instead new wine must be poured into new wineskins.¹⁴³

(Luk 5:39) ¹⁴⁴ No¹⁴⁵ one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is good enough.' "¹⁴⁶

(Luk 6:1) ***Lord of the Sabbath***

Jesus¹ was going through the grain fields on² a Sabbath,³ and his disciples picked some heads of wheat,⁴ rubbed them in their hands, and ate them.⁵

(Guzik)

Luk 6:1-49

Luke 6 - THE SERMON ON THE PLAIN

A. Sabbath controversy.

1. (Luk_6:1-2) The source of the controversy: the disciples are accused of “harvesting” on the Sabbath.

Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate *them*, rubbing *them* in *their* hands. And some of the Pharisees said to them, “Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?”

a. **His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them, rubbing them in their hands:** There was nothing wrong with what they did. Their gleaning was not considered stealing, according to Deu_23:25.

b. **Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?** The problem was with *the day* on which they did it. The Rabbis made an elaborate list of “do” and “don’t” items relevant to the Sabbath and this violated one of the items on this list.

i. When the disciples did what they did, in the eyes of the religious leaders they were guilty of reaping, threshing, winnowing, and preparing food. Four violations of the Sabbath in one mouthful!

c. This approach to the Sabbath continues today among Orthodox Jews. In early 1992, tenants let three apartments in an Orthodox neighborhood in Israel burn to the ground while they asked a rabbi whether a telephone call to the fire department on the Sabbath would violate Jewish law. Observant Jews are forbidden to use the phone on the Sabbath, because doing so would break an electrical current, which is considered a form of work. In the half-hour it took the rabbi to decide “yes,” the fire spread to two neighboring apartments.

2. (Luk_6:3-5) Jesus responds to the accusation with two important principles.

But Jesus answering them said, “Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him,

which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?" And He said to them, "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

a. **Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry:** The reference to David's use of the "holy bread" in 1Sa_21:1-6 shows the first principle: *human need is more important than religious ritual*.

i. This is exactly what many people, steeped in tradition, simply cannot accept. They don't believe that what God really wants is mercy before sacrifice (Hos_6:6); that love to others is more important than religious rituals (Isa_58:1-9); that *the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart; these, O God, You will not despise* (Psa_51:17).

ii. "Any application of the Sabbath Law which operates to the detriment of man is out of harmony with God's purpose." (Morgan)

b. **The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath:** The second principle is even more dramatic. Jesus declares that He is the **Lord of the Sabbath**, and the Lord of the Sabbath was not offended by His disciple's actions, then these religious leaders should not have been offended.

3. (Luk_6:6-11) The Lord of the Sabbath heals on the Sabbath.

Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered. So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Arise and stand here." And he arose and stood. Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?" And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. But they were

filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

a. **So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath:** By their very actions, the Pharisees admit Jesus has the power of God to work miracles, yet they seek to entrap Him. It is as if a man could fly and the authorities arrest him for not landing at airports!

i. The religious leaders **watched** Jesus **closely**, but with no heart of love for Him. We can watch Jesus, but still be far from our hearts from Him.

ii. What is more, they *knew* Jesus would do something when He saw this man in need. In this sense, the Pharisees had more faith than many of us, because we often doubt Jesus' desire to meet the needs of others.

b. **Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?** In His question to the religious leaders, Jesus emphasizes the truth about the Sabbath. There is never a *wrong* day to do something truly *good*.

c. **Stretch out your hand:** In this, Jesus commanded the man with the withered hand to do something impossible. But as the man put forth effort, God did the rest. God never commands us without enabling us.

d. **They were filled with rage:** The reaction of the religious leaders is shocking, but true. When Jesus did this miracle on the Sabbath, He met the needs of simple people and broke the petty religious traditions of the establishment.

i. There is always such a powerful lure to this type of religious legalism in the Christian life because there is never a shortage of leaders who want to lead this way, and never a shortage of people who want to follow this way. But God wants us to have the Holy Spirit write the application of His word into our hearts, not the rules of man made into the law of God.

ii. Jesus constantly rebuked the religious leaders of his day for this kind of heart. He said of them, *laying aside the*

commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men . . . all too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition . . . making the word of God of no effect through your tradition. (Mar_7:8-9; Mar_7:13) iii. Jesus wasn't trying to reform the Sabbath. He tried to show that in their understanding of the Sabbath, they missed the whole point. A legalist wants to get you debating *rules*; but the point isn't *which* rules, the point is *the basic way we approach God*. Is it based on what we do for Him, or is it based on what He has done for us in Jesus Christ?

e. **But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus:** Apparently, the religious leaders thought it was fine to be filled with rage and desire to kill a godly man who never sinned against anybody on the Sabbath. That was all right, but you better not heal someone on the Sabbath!

B. The choosing of the twelve apostles.

1. (Luk_6:12-13) Jesus chooses the twelve.

Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to *Himself*; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:

a. **He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God:** Jesus was about to choose His disciples. In one sense, there was nothing in Jesus' three years of ministry before the cross more important than this. These were the men who would carry on what He had done, and without them, the work of Jesus would never extend through the whole world. No wonder Jesus gave this an entire night of prayer.

i. Jesus was God. Why didn't He simply use His infinite knowledge to pick the apostles instead of praying all night? Because like most every other struggle Jesus faced, He faced this one as a man, a man who needed to seek the will of His Father just as you and I do.

ii. You have to wonder how many hours of that night in prayer were spent praying over Judas alone.

b. **He called His disciples to Himself:** The disciples (and the apostles for that matter) belonged to Jesus. Disciples never belong to any man; they only belong to Jesus. They are **His disciples**.

i. "A disciple was a learner, a student, but in the first century a student did not simply study a subject; he followed a teacher. There is an element of personal attachment in 'disciple' that is lacking in 'student.'" (Morris)

c. **From them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:** From among the group of His followers (the larger group of disciples), He picked twelve to be **apostles**.

i. What is an apostle? The idea behind the ancient Greek word for *apostle* is "ambassador." It describes someone who represents another, and has a message from their sender. Jesus was an apostle in this sense according to Heb_3:1.

d. **He chose twelve:** Why did Jesus choose **twelve** apostles? Because this is the foundation of the new chosen people, and as Israel had twelve tribes, Jesus would have twelve apostles.

2. (Luk_6:14-16) The twelve listed.

Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; Judas *the son* of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

a. How many of these men do we really know anything about? **Peter, James, John, and Judas** we know something about. But of the other eight, we pretty much only know their name. Their fame is reserved for heaven, where their names are on the twelve foundations of God's heavenly city (Rev_21:14).

b. There are many interesting connections with this group. There are brothers (**James and John, Peter and Andrew**); business associates (**Peter, James, and John** were all

fishermen); opposing political viewpoints (**Matthew** the Roman-friendly tax collector, and **Simon**, the Roman-hating **Zealot**); and one who would betray Jesus (**Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor**).

i. "Judas's surname of Iscariot probably indicates that he was a man from Kerioth: he thus seems to have been the only Judean among the twelve." (Geldenhuis)

ii. A man once asked a theologian, "Why did Jesus choose Judas Iscariot to be his disciple?"

The teacher replied, "I don't know, but I have an even harder question: Why did Jesus choose me?"

3. (Luk_6:17-19) Jesus ministers healing and deliverance to a multitude.

And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed *them* all.

a. **He came down with them:** Jesus comes down **with them** to minister to this crowd. Jesus not only wanted to teach them about serving others; He wanted them to help Him. Here they seem to work as a team.

i. Jesus could have done it all by Himself. But it was important that He work together as a team with these twelve, both for their sake and the sake of the work.

b. **A great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon:** People come from great distances to be healed and touched by Jesus, even from Gentile cities like **Tyre and Sidon**.

c. Jesus not only *had* the power of God in Him; the **power went out from Him and healed them all**.

Many of us want the power of God in us *to help us*. But how many really long for the power of God to go out from us to

touch a needy world?

C. Introduction to the Sermon on the Plain.

1. This has been long hailed as the sum of Jesus' (or anybody's) ethical teaching; no portion of Jesus' teaching has made such an impression.

a. Once, when the religious leaders sent officers to arrest Jesus, they came back empty handed, saying *No man ever spoke like this Man!* (Joh_7:46) More than any other one teaching, this sermon of Jesus sets Him apart from any other teacher.

b. It has been said if you took all the good advice for how to live ever uttered by any philosopher or psychiatrist or counselor, took out the foolishness and boiled it all down to the real essentials, you would be left with a poor imitation of this great sermon.

c. The American Revolutionaries had their *Declaration of Independence*. Karl Marx had his *Communist Manifesto*. Adolf Hitler had his *Mein Kampf*. This is Jesus' main message saying what His Kingdom is all about. It is a defining document.

d. The early Church was very aware of this teaching from Jesus. James - one of the first epistles - quotes it often, as do many of the early Church Fathers.

2. Why is Luke's version different than Matthew's? Are they the same sermon?

a. Scholarly opinion is divided on this issue. But we should remember that Jesus was an itinerant preacher, whose main emphasis was the Kingdom of God (see Luk_4:43).

b. Itinerant preachers often repeat themselves to different crowds, especially when teaching upon the same topic. This is probably the same sermon as Matthew 5-7, but possibly at a different time and a different place.

3. This sermon is often, and properly, referred to as the "Agenda of God's Kingdom." It does not deal with salvation so much, but lays out for the disciple and the potential

disciple how having Jesus as King translate into how you live every day.

D. Jesus shows us how different God's agenda is.

1. (Luk_6:20-23) Strange blessings.

Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed *are you* poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed *are you* who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed *are you* who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile *you*, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake.

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward *is* great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

a. **He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples:** We notice that Jesus is speaking to His disciples (**toward His disciples**). The Sermon on the Plain is directed towards **disciples**, though others may - and should - hear.

b. **Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God:** To be **poor** in spirit is not a man's confession that he is by nature insignificant, or personally without value, for that would be untrue. Instead, it is a confession that he *is* sinful and rebellious and utterly without moral virtues adequate to commend him to God.

i. **Poor:** Jesus uses the more severe term for poverty. The ancient Greek word here indicates someone who must beg for whatever they have or will get.

ii. But those who are **poor** in spirit, so poor they must beg, are rewarded: they receive **the kingdom of God**. Therefore poverty of spirit is an absolute prerequisite for receiving the kingdom of heaven, because as long as we keep illusions about our own spiritual resources, we will never receive from God what we absolutely need to be saved.

iii. Poverty of spirit cannot be artificially induced by self-hatred. It comes as the Holy Spirit works in our heart and we respond to Him.

iv. Jesus says that the **poor** in spirit would be **blessed**: the idea behind the ancient Greek word for **blessed** is *happy*, but in the truest, Godly sense of the word, not in our modern sense of merely being comfortable at the moment.

v. Poverty of spirit is placed first for a reason, because it puts the following commands into perspective. They cannot be fulfilled in our own strength, but only by a beggar's reliance on God's power.

c. **Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh:** Jesus' adds two other kinds of seekers, those who **hunger** and those who **weep**. The poor, the hungry, and the weeping can all be blessed because Jesus is here to meet their needs.

i. Unfortunately, we look for the wrong things to fill our sense of poverty, hunger, and need for comfort. Jesus tells us to find the answers to all these needs in Him.

d. **Blessed are you when men hate you:** When we seek God like a poor man seeks money, like a hungry man seeks food, or like a weeping person seeks comfort, we will face persecution from those who want other things.

i. **Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!** We can really rejoice when we are persecuted, because we know that it means we are on the right side - God's side, and the side of so many faithful who went on before us.

e. Jesus makes what seem to be paradoxical promises, but He can make them because He is God, and knows that God will settle all things rightly, and according to these principles.

i. He seems to promise that if we are really following Him, we will be *totally happy* and *often in trouble* - two things that seem to contradict one another.

2. (Luk_6:24-26) Strange woes.

"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full, for you shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”

a. **Woe:** This is an expression of regret and compassion, not a threat. The woes Jesus pronounces seem just as paradoxical as His blessings.

b. **But woe to you who are rich . . . Woe to you who are full:** We should right feel bad for people who do not sense their own need of God. We won’t come to Him the way we should until we know we are poor, hungry, and needing comfort.

i. Tragically, many won’t come to Jesus until their lives are falling apart around them. No wonder Jesus felt bad for people who would never come to Him except under those kind of circumstances.

3. What does Jesus mean by these strange sayings?

a. He contrasts the current expectations of the kingdom with the spiritual reality of His Kingdom. Jesus tells us that God does unexpected things. His words make a mockery of the world’s values. He exalts what the world despises and rejects what the world admires.

i. Too often, we just ask God to bless *our* agenda instead of giving ourselves over to *His* agenda. What Jesus speaks about in this message are what should be at the top of our “to do” list.

b. He is turning upside-down (rather, rightside-up) their perception of the Kingdom of God. Many feel that if they are rich, full, and laughing, then they have all they need in life. Jesus points out just how wrong this thinking is.

E. God’s agenda is an agenda of love.

1. (Luk_6:27-30) The way to act towards your enemies.

“But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the *one* cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic either. Give to

everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask *them* back.”

a. **Love your enemies:** After telling us to do this, then Jesus tells us exactly how to do it. We love our enemies when we **do good, bless, and pray for those who spitefully use you.**

i. The love Jesus tells us to have for our enemies is not a warm, fuzzy feeling that we have deep in our hearts. If we wait for that, we will never love them. The love we are to have for our enemies is a love that *does* something for them, quite apart from how we might feel about them.

ii. You can look for loopholes here as long as you like, but you won't find them. We are *commanded* to **love our enemies.**

b. **Bless those who curse you:** This means to love others - our enemies - by the way we talk about them.

c. **To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also:** Jesus then tells us how to deal with people who mistreat, coerce, and manipulate us. We should take command of the situation by sacrificial giving and love.

i. When Jesus speaks about turning the other cheek, He isn't talking about being passive in the face of a physical assault. He means we should not defend our self in the face of a grievous insult. Culturally, the slap on the cheek was more an attack on honor than a physical assault.

ii. Jesus isn't prohibiting *defense*, but *retaliation*. When we truly love our enemies, it will drive them crazy.

d. **From him who takes away your goods do not ask them back:** We can only practice this kind of sacrificial love when we know that God will take care of us. We know that if we give away our tunic, God has plenty more of them to give us.

i. If we really lived this, wouldn't people walk all over us? Where would the limit be? The limit is easy to find: the limit of love. When fulfilling a person's request isn't loving

towards them, then I shouldn't do it. Giving a person everything they ask for isn't necessarily love.

ii. But it is all too rare that we come to the limit of love. Usually, we allow our own pride, or lack of comfort, or unwillingness to sacrifice to be our limit.

2. (Luk_6:31-35) The attitude to have towards your enemies: treat them the way you would want to be treated.

"And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil."

a. **And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise:** Many of the Jewish people of Jesus' day bitterly resented their political enemies, the Romans, and looked for the day when the Kingdom would come and destroy them, thus fulfilling their hate. But Jesus says that in His Kingdom, you love your enemies and do good for them. The best victory over an enemy is to make him a friend.

b. **For He is kind to the unthankful and evil:** This ethic is founded in the character of God. This is how He treats us.

F. God's agenda is an agenda of mercy.

1. (Luk_6:36-38) The principles to follow.

"Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

a. **Judge not, and you shall not be judged:** Despite the way this passage is quoted by many of those who are not Christians (who seem to have memorized it faithfully), and even by many Christians, Jesus is *not* calling to a universal acceptance of any lifestyle or teaching.

i. Note what Jesus says in Luk_6:43-45 in this same message. There, Jesus calls us to know people by their fruits, and *some* sort of assessment is necessary for that.

ii. The Christian is called to unconditional *love*, but he is not called to unconditional *approval*. We really *can* love people who do things we do not approve of.

b. **Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned:** Instead, Jesus is speaks against being *judgmental*, that is, judging motives and the inner man, which only God can know. Jesus calls us to have the same kind of mercy God has towards us.

i. We can judge the *fruit* of others, but we can rarely judge their motives with accuracy.

c. **For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you:** In addition, Jesus does not *prohibit* judgment of others. He only requires that our judgment be completely fair, and that we only judge others by a standard we would also like to be judged by.

i. Most of our judgment in regard to others is wrong, not because we are judging according to a standard, but because we are being hypocritical in the application of that standard. We ignore it in our own lives.

2. (Luk_6:39-42) Illustrations centered around the idea of seeing.

And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that *is* in your eye,' when you yourself do

not see the plank that *is* in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye."

a. **Can the blind lead the blind?** We shouldn't look to other blind men to lead us. We can go no further than they themselves have. Instead, we should make Jesus our leader, our teacher, who sees and knows all things.

b. **And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye?**

The figures of a speck and a plank are real figures used humorously. Jesus shows that we are generally far more tolerant to our own sin than we are to the sin of others. We need to show to others the mercy God shows to us.

c. **You yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye:** Our hypocrisy in these matters is always more evident to others than to ourselves. We somehow find a way to ignore the plank in our own eye, but others notice it immediately.

i. A good example of this kind of hypocrisy was David's reaction to Nathan's story about a man who unjustly stole and killed another man's lamb. David quickly condemned the man, but was blind to his own sin, which was far greater.

d. It is a good thing to help your brother with his speck, but not before dealing with the plank in your own eye.

3. (Luk_6:43-45) We can only follow Jesus this way if we have been radically changed by Him. If Jesus has touched us, it will show in our lives.

"For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For *men* do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."

a. **A good tree does not bear bad fruit:** To live this way, to produce this fruit with your life, you must be good at the

root, at the heart. The kind of love and mercy Jesus talks about is only possible if we are bearing fruit for God.

b. **Every tree is known by its own fruit:** This fruit is the inevitable result of who we are; eventually (though it may take a time for the harvest to come) the good or bad fruit is evident, revealing what sort of “tree” we are.

c. Jesus wants to perform a radical change on heart in us. We need the transforming work of God to do it in our lives from the inside out.

4. (Luk_6:46-49) Concluding exhortation: *doing* what Jesus commanded is our foundation.

“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

a. **But why do you call Me “Lord, Lord,” and do not do the things which I say?** Outward conformity is not enough. You must be a doer of the word, not only a hearer. Calling Jesus “**Lord**” is an empty statement if it never makes a difference in your life.

b. **He is like a man building a house:** In Jesus’ illustration, both houses looked the same from the outside; but they were far different because of their foundation.

c. **And when the flood arose:** The flooding stream is a display of trials or judgment. We should be thankful for the flooding streams in our lives now, because it is better for us to find out now what kind of foundation our lives are on than at judgment before God.

d. **But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation:**

A mere *hearing* of God's word isn't enough to provide a secure foundation. It is necessary that we are also *doers* of His word. If we are not, we commit the sin that will surely find us out, the sin of doing nothing (Num_32:23), and **great** will be our **fall**.

i. Love and mercy are things we have to *live* as Christians, not just hear and talk about. We need to realize that if we do not want to live lives of love and mercy, we don't want to follow

Jesus and we don't want His agenda.

(Luk 6:2) But some of the Pharisees⁶ said, "Why are you⁷ doing what is against the law⁸ on the Sabbath?"

(Luk 6:3) Jesus⁹ answered them,¹⁰ "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry — (Luk 6:4) how he entered the house of God, took¹¹ and ate the sacred bread,¹² which is not lawful¹³ for any to eat but the priests alone, and¹⁴ gave it to his companions?"¹⁵

(Luk 6:5) Then¹⁶ he said to them, "The Son of Man is lord¹⁷ of the Sabbath."

(Luk 6:6) ***Healing a Withered Hand***

On¹⁸ another Sabbath, Jesus¹⁹ entered the synagogue²⁰ and was teaching. Now²¹ a man was there whose right hand was withered.²²

(Luk 6:7) The experts in the law²³ and the Pharisees²⁴ watched²⁵ Jesus²⁶ closely to see if²⁷ he would heal on the Sabbath,²⁸ so that they could find a reason to accuse him.

(Luk 6:8) But²⁹ he knew³⁰ their thoughts,³¹ and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Get up and stand here."³² So³³ he rose and stood there.

(Luk 6:9) Then³⁴ Jesus said to them, "I ask you,³⁵ is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath or to do evil, to save a life or to destroy it?"

(Luk 6:10) After³⁶ looking around³⁷ at them all, he said to the man,³⁸ "Stretch out your hand." The man³⁹ did so, and his hand was restored.⁴⁰

(Luk 6:11) But they were filled with mindless rage⁴¹ and began debating with one another what they would do⁴² to Jesus.

(Luk 6:12) ***Choosing the Twelve Apostles***

Now⁴³ it was during this time that Jesus⁴⁴ went out to the mountain⁴⁵ to pray, and he spent all night⁴⁶ in prayer to God.⁴⁷

(Luk 6:13) When⁴⁸ morning came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles:⁴⁹

(Luk 6:14) Simon⁵⁰ (whom he named Peter), and his brother Andrew; and James, John, Philip, Bartholomew,⁵¹

(Luk 6:15) Matthew, Thomas,⁵² James the son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot,⁵³

(Luk 6:16) Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot,⁵⁴ who became a traitor.

(Luk 6:17) ***The Sermon on the Plain***

Then⁵⁵ he came down with them and stood on a level place.⁵⁶ And a large number⁵⁷ of his disciples had gathered⁵⁸ along with⁵⁹

a vast multitude from all over Judea, from⁶⁰ Jerusalem,⁶¹ and from the seacoast of Tyre⁶² and Sidon.⁶³ They came to hear him and to be healed⁶⁴ of their diseases, (Luk 6:18) and those who suffered from⁶⁵ unclean⁶⁶ spirits were cured.

(Luk 6:19) The⁶⁷ whole crowd was trying to touch him, because power⁶⁸ was coming out from him and healing them all.

(Luk 6:20) Then⁶⁹ he looked up⁷⁰ at his disciples and said:

"Blessed⁷¹ are you who are poor,⁷² for the kingdom of God belongs⁷³ to you.

(Luk 6:21) "Blessed are you who hunger⁷⁴ now, for you will be satisfied.⁷⁵

"Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.⁷⁶

(Luk 6:22) "Blessed are you when people⁷⁷ hate you, and when they exclude you and insult you and reject you as evil⁷⁸ on account of the Son of Man!

(Luk 6:23) Rejoice in that day, and jump for joy, because⁷⁹ your reward is great in heaven. For their ancestors⁸⁰ did the

same things to the prophets.⁸¹

(Luk 6:24) "But woe⁸² to you who are rich, for you have received⁸³ your comfort⁸⁴ already.

(Luk 6:25) "Woe to you who are well satisfied with food⁸⁵ now, for you will be hungry.

"Woe to you⁸⁶ who laugh⁸⁷ now, for you will mourn and weep.

(Luk 6:26) "Woe to you⁸⁸ when all people⁸⁹ speak well of you, for their ancestors⁹⁰ did the same things to the false prophets.

(Luk 6:27) "But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies,⁹¹ do good to those who hate you, (Luk 6:28) bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat⁹² you.

(Luk 6:29) To the person who strikes you on the cheek,⁹³ offer the other as well,⁹⁴ and from the person who takes away your coat,⁹⁵ do not withhold your tunic⁹⁶ either.⁹⁷

(Luk 6:30) Give to everyone who asks you,⁹⁸ and do not ask for your possessions⁹⁹ back¹⁰⁰ from the person who takes them away.

(Luk 6:31) Treat others¹⁰¹ in the same way that you would want them to treat you.¹⁰²

(Luk 6:32) "If¹⁰³ you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners¹⁰⁴ love those who love them.¹⁰⁵

(Luk 6:33) And¹⁰⁶ if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even¹⁰⁷ sinners¹⁰⁸ do the same.

(Luk 6:34) And if you lend to those from whom you hope to be repaid,¹⁰⁹ what credit is that to you? Even sinners¹¹⁰ lend to sinners, so that they may be repaid in full.¹¹¹

(Luk 6:35) But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing back.¹¹² Then¹¹³ your reward will be

great, and you will be sons¹¹⁴ of the Most High,¹¹⁵ because he is kind to ungrateful and evil people.¹¹⁶

(Luk 6:36) Be merciful,¹¹⁷ just as your Father is merciful.

(Luk 6:37) ***Do Not Judge Others***

"Do¹¹⁸ not judge,¹¹⁹ and you will not be judged;¹²⁰ do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; forgive,¹²¹ and you will be forgiven.

(Luk 6:38) Give, and it will be given to you: A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over,¹²² will be poured¹²³ into your lap. For the measure you use will be the measure you receive."¹²⁴

(Luk 6:39) He also told them a parable: "Someone who is blind cannot lead another who is blind, can he?¹²⁵ Won't they both fall¹²⁶ into a pit?

(Luk 6:40) A disciple¹²⁷ is not greater than¹²⁸ his teacher, but everyone when fully trained will be like his teacher.

(Luk 6:41) Why¹²⁹ do you see the speck¹³⁰ in your brother's eye, but fail to see¹³¹ the beam of wood¹³² in your own?

(Luk 6:42) How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck from your eye,' while you yourself don't see the beam in your own? You hypocrite! First remove the beam from your own eye, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

(Luk 6:43) "For¹³³ no good tree bears bad¹³⁴ fruit, nor again¹³⁵ does a bad tree bear good fruit, (Luk 6:44) for each tree is known¹³⁶ by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered¹³⁷ from thorns, nor are grapes picked¹³⁸ from brambles.¹³⁹

(Luk 6:45) The good person out of the good treasury of his¹⁴⁰ heart¹⁴¹ produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasury¹⁴²

produces evil, for his mouth speaks¹⁴³ from what fills¹⁴⁴ his heart.

(Luk 6:46) "Why¹⁴⁵ do you call me 'Lord, Lord,'¹⁴⁶ and don't do what I tell you?¹⁴⁷

(Luk 6:47) "Everyone who comes to me and listens to my words and puts them into practice¹⁴⁸ — I will show you what he is like: (Luk 6:48) He is like a man¹⁴⁹ building a house, who dug down deep,¹⁵⁰ and laid the foundation on bedrock. When¹⁵¹ a flood came, the river¹⁵² burst against that house but¹⁵³ could not shake it, because it had been well built.¹⁵⁴

(Luk 6:49) But the person who hears and does not put my words into practice¹⁵⁵ is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When¹⁵⁶ the river burst against that house,¹⁵⁷ it collapsed immediately, and was utterly destroyed!"¹⁵⁸

(Luk 7:1) ***Healing the Centurion's Slave***

After Jesus¹ had finished teaching all this to the people,² he entered Capernaum.³

(Guzik)

Luk 7:1-50

Luke 7 - THE SICK HEALED, THE DEAD RAISED, THE SINNER FORGIVEN

A. A centurion's servant is healed.

1. (Luk_7:1-5) The centurion's request.

Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue."

a. **A certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die:** This centurion seems to be a devout, kind, humble man - yet, all the same he is a

centurion - not only a Gentile, but a Roman soldier, and an instrument of Israel's oppression.

i. The centurion had an unusual attitude towards his slave. Under Roman law, a master had the right to kill his slave, and it was expected that he would do so if the slave became ill or injured to the point where he could not work.

b. **He sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant:** Apparently, the centurion did not think himself worthy of a personal meeting with Jesus, and perhaps thought Jesus would not *want* to meet with a Gentile like himself, so he sent Jewish leaders as his representatives to Jesus.

i. We don't need to have the centurion's fear today. We don't need to send a representative to Jesus - we can come to Him ourselves.

2. (Luk_7:6-8) The centurion tells Jesus that He need not come, because he knows that Jesus need not be present to do His work.

Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does *it*. "

a. **Then Jesus went with them:** Jesus did not hesitate to go to the centurion's house, and we half wish the centurion would have allowed Him. Would Jesus have entered a Gentile's house? It was completely against Jewish custom, but not against God's law.

b. **But say the word, and my servant will be healed:** The centurion fully understands that Jesus' healing power was not some sort of magic trick that required the magician's presence. Instead he knew Jesus had true

authority, and can command things to be done and completed outside His immediate presence.

i. The centurion shows great faith in Jesus' *word*. He understands that Jesus can heal with His word just as easily as with a touch.

ii. **For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me:** The centurion also knew about the military chain of command, and how the orders of one in authority were unquestioningly obeyed - he sees that Jesus has *at least* that much authority.

iii. "He believes that, just as he, a man with authority, is obeyed by his subordinates, just so surely will the authoritative utterance of Christ be fulfilled even though He is not present where the sick person is." (Geldenhuys)

c. The centurion also shows great sensitivity to Jesus, in that he wants to spare Jesus the awkward challenge of whether or not to enter a Gentile's house - as well as the time and trouble of travel.

i. He didn't know Jesus well enough to know that He would feel awkward in the least; but his *consideration* of Jesus in this situation is impressive.

3. (Luk_7:9-10) Jesus heals the servant and marvels at the centurion's faith.

When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.

a. **He marveled at him:** We see that Jesus only **marveled** on a few occasions. He does so here, at the faith of the centurion, and also at the unbelief of His own people (Mar_6:6). Jesus can be amazed at either our *faith* or our *unbelief*.

b. The centurion knew that Jesus had true power from God, not magic that had to be used according to some ritualistic formula.

B. Jesus raises a boy from the dead.

1. (Luk_7:11-13) Jesus comes upon a funeral procession.

Now it happened, the day after, *that* He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep."

a. **A dead man was being carried out:** The tragedy is compounded when we are told that the boy was **the only son of his mother** and that the mother herself was a **widow**. The loss of her only son means that there is nothing in her future except a life of destitute poverty and misery.

b. **Do not weep:** Why does Jesus tell her to stop crying? There is nothing wrong for a mother to **weep** at the funeral of her son; but Jesus is showing her that her sorrow will be turned to joy. Jesus' words of compassion to the mother would have been cruel if He did not have the power to back them up.

2. (Luk_7:14-17) Jesus raises the boy from the dead.

Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried *him* stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people." And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

a. **He came and touched the open coffin:** The picture is all the more powerful when we are told that it was an **open coffin**. Jesus is able to look at this boy, and speak to a dead person as if they were alive.

b. **Young man, I say to you, arise:** Rom_4:17 shows that this is what God alone does - speak to the dead as if they were alive. *God, who gives life to the dead and calls those*

things which do not exist as though they did. Jesus could speak to something dead and bring life to it.

c. **So he who was dead sat up and began to speak:**

Jesus had a strange habit of breaking up funeral processions by raising the dead, such as Jarius' daughter (Luk_8:41-56) and Lazarus (Joh_11:1-45). Jesus didn't like death, and He regarded it as an enemy that had to be defeated.

d. We remember that this boy was not resurrected, but resuscitated - he rose from the dead only to die again. God promises that we will be resurrected, and rise from the dead never to die again.

C. Jesus and John the Baptist.

1. (Luk_7:18-19) John questions Jesus: are You really the Christ (the Messiah)?

Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

a. **Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?** Why does John ask this question, especially after all the miraculous signs that would demonstrate this to him? Weren't all the prophecies through his father Zacharias (Luk_1:13-17 and Luk_1:67-80) and the voice from heaven at Jesus' baptism (Luk_3:21-22) enough proof?

b. Matthew tells us that John asked this question from prison (Mat_11:2-3). Even John the Baptist probably had some misunderstanding of Jesus' mission, and thought: "If He really is who I thought He is, why am I in prison?" John probably asked this question because of discouragement in prison.

i. "John was already in prison, and things began to appear incomprehensible to him. He had expected that Christ would speedily destroy the powers of darkness and judge the unrighteous. But instead of doing this, He leaves him, His forerunner, helpless in prison."

(Geldenhuys)

ii. It is the same with us. Our discouraging circumstances often cause us to forget or doubt who Jesus is.

2. (Luk_7:20-23) Jesus' answer to John's disciples: tell him that the Messiah is alive and well.

When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'" And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that *the* blind see, *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed, *the* deaf hear, *the* dead are raised, *the* poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me."

a. **And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight:** John might have wondered why the power of the Messiah was not being shown in more significant acts, such as in freeing him from prison and calling down fire from heaven on the evil political leaders who put him in prison!

b. **Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard:** Jesus sends John's messengers back with a simple report. The Messiah is definitely here, but His power is manifested in acts of mercy, not judgment, and **blessed is he** who can receive this Messiah of mercy.

i. When discouragement has led us to believe that Jesus isn't really who we thought He was, we need to clear our eyes and look to God's Word to see who He really is.

c. How can we know that the power of Jesus is really at work? When we see the simple needs of simple people being met in a powerful way.

3. (Luk_7:24-28) Jesus teaches about John the Baptist.

When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments?"

Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. This is *he* of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

a. **What did you go out into the wilderness to see?**

Jesus explains that John was a great man of God, one who did not live for his own comfort or the approval of others. John is a chosen prophet of God, not a man-pleaser.

b. **For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist:** Yet, John was greater than all the prophets, mainly because he had the privilege of saying of the Messiah "here He is" instead of "He is coming."

c. **Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You:** Jesus quotes the Malachi passage about the coming of John, because the prophets themselves were not prophesied, but John was, and this is one way that he is greater than all previous prophets.

d. **But he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he:** Yet, John the Baptist is less than the least in the kingdom of God, because John was not born again under the terms of the new covenant, on account that Jesus' work on the cross had not yet been accomplished.

4. (Luk_7:29-35) Jesus admonishes those who refuse to be pleased by either His ministry or John's.

And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John.

But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the

marketplace and calling to one another, saying: 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we mourned to you, and you did not weep.' For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.'

The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by all her children."

a. **And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John:** Those who had repented in preparation for the Messiah by receiving John's baptism found it easy to receive what Jesus said. But those who would not repent **rejected the counsel of God for themselves.**

b. **We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we mourned to you, and you did not weep:** Jesus points out the hypocrisy of these hardened hearts who criticized both John the Baptist and Jesus Himself. "If the message is unwelcome, nothing that the messenger can say or do will be right."

(Maclaren)

D. Jesus forgives a sinful woman.

1. (Luk_7:36-38) A sinful woman anoints Jesus' feet.

Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped *them* with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed *them* with the fragrant oil.

a. **And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner:** Some suppose this is Mary Magdalene, but we have no

evidence that this was her. In Joh_12:3, Mary of Bethany also anoints Jesus' feet with oil, but this was a separate incident.

b. **Who was a sinner:** This tells us more than that she was a sinner just like we are all sinners. She was a particularly notorious sinner - most likely, a prostitute.

i. It was pretty bold for this woman with a sinful reputation to come into the house of a Pharisee, but she was willing to do anything to express her love for Jesus. Going into that house took courage and determination.

c. **Brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil:** Morris on the **alabaster flask:** "It had no handles and was furnished with a long neck which was broken off when the contents were needed . . . We may fairly deduce that this perfume was costly. Jewish ladies commonly wore a perfume flask suspended from a cord round the neck, and it was so much a part of them that they were allowed to wear it on the sabbath."

d. **And stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears:** How did she pour this perfumed oil on Jesus while He had sat down to eat? "People reclined on low couches at festive meals, leaning on the left arm with the head towards the table and the body stretched away from it. The sandals were removed before reclining." (Morris)

i. We can imagine the woman coming originally to only anoint Jesus' feet with oil; but then, being overcome with emotion, tears flowing from her eyes, starting to wash His feet with her tears, wiping them clean with her hair, and kissing His feet repeatedly.

ii. Normally, this oil would be used on someone's head. This woman shows her humility by saying, "the best perfume for my head is only good enough to anoint Your feet."

iii. "To have her hair flowing would be deemed immodest . . . [she] kissed fervently, again and again." (Bruce) But in her emotional display of love, it doesn't matter to her.

2. (Luk_7:39-47) Simon the Pharisee objects to this, and Jesus answers his objection.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, “This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this is* who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.” And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.” “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?” Simon answered and said, “I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped *them* with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, *which are* many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little.”

a. **This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner:** Simon the Pharisee doubted that Jesus was a prophet because he thought that Jesus was unable to see this woman’s heart. But Jesus has no problem seeing hearts - He tells Simon the Pharisee exactly what is on *his* heart.

b. Jesus uses a simple and easily understood parable to illustrate the point: the more we are forgiven, the more we should love.

i. We don’t need to go and sin more in order to be forgiven more, thus loving God more. All we need to do is become more sensitive to our current state of sinfulness.

c. **Do you see this woman?** Therefore, Jesus explains the motive of the woman's deeply emotional devotion. She loved Jesus because in faith she anticipated His forgiveness.

i. Simon the Pharisee did not see the woman as she *was* (a humble sinner seeking forgiveness, pouring out love for Jesus) for he was looking at her as she had *been* (a notorious sinner).

d. **I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet:** Simon the Pharisee denied Jesus the common courtesies between a host and a guest - washing the feet, a kiss for a greeting, anointing the head with oil. Does he now reproach the woman for giving them to Jesus?

i. Jesus noticed *neglect* and *appreciated* devotion. He did not reject deeply emotional devotion.

3. (Luk_7:48-50) Jesus assures the woman of her forgiveness from God.

Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

a. **Your sins are forgiven:** If Jesus has already said that her sins *are forgiven* (Luk_7:47), why does he turn to the woman and repeat it? Because we need the healing power inherent in the words **your sins are forgiven**.

i. It can be so hard for us to truly believe that we are forgiven, that often, we must be *persuaded* of it.

b. On what basis does Jesus forgive her? Not because He just wants to irritate Simon the Pharisee; but because the woman has displayed humility of repentance and a devoted love for Jesus.

i. The humility and love are themselves God's work within the woman. She could not come to Jesus in this way unless God had first moved within her.

c. **Your faith has saved you:** The key to her forgiveness was **faith** - it was her faith that saved her, because it was her faith that believed the words from Jesus **your sins are**

forgiven. Faith enabled her to take the grace God gave to her.

i. Forgiveness is ready from God; there is no hesitation or shortage on His part. Our part is to come with humility and loving submission to Jesus, and to receive the forgiveness He offers by faith.

d. **Go in peace:** The woman came to Jesus in complete humility, with the attitude that she was not worthy to even be in His presence. That was a good way for her to come to Jesus, but He doesn't want her to *stay* there. He raises her up, acknowledges her love, forgives her sin, and sends her in peace.

e. Of the works done in this chapter, this is the greatest. Sickness that is healed (as in the centurion's servant), or life that is restored (as in the widow's son) are not permanent works of healing, because those bodies will one day die again. But sins that are forgiven are forgiven *forever*.

(Luk 7:2) A centurion⁴ there⁵ had a slave⁶ who was highly regarded,⁷ but who was sick and at the point of death.

(Luk 7:3) When the centurion⁸ heard⁹ about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders¹⁰ to him, asking him to come¹¹ and heal his slave.

(Luk 7:4) When¹² they came¹³ to Jesus, they urged¹⁴ him earnestly,¹⁵ "He is worthy¹⁶ to have you do this for him, (Luk 7:5) because he loves our nation,¹⁷ and even¹⁸ built our synagogue."¹⁹

(Luk 7:6) So²⁰ Jesus went with them. When²¹ he was not far from the house, the centurion²² sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself,²³ for I am not worthy²⁴ to have you come under my roof.

(Luk 7:7) That is why²⁵ I did not presume²⁶ to come to you. Instead, say the word, and my servant must be healed.²⁷

(Luk 7:8) For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me.²⁸ I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes,²⁹ and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it."³⁰

(Luk 7:9) When Jesus heard this, he was amazed³¹ at him. He turned and said to the crowd that followed him, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith!"³²

(Luk 7:10) So³³ when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave³⁴ well.

(Luk 7:11) ***Raising a Widow's Son***

Soon³⁵ afterward³⁶ Jesus³⁷ went to a town³⁸ called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him.

(Luk 7:12) As he approached the town gate, a man³⁹ who had died was being carried out,⁴⁰ the only son of his mother (who⁴¹ was a widow⁴²), and a large crowd from the town⁴³ was with her.

(Luk 7:13) When⁴⁴ the Lord saw her, he had compassion⁴⁵ for her and said to her, "Do not weep."⁴⁶

(Luk 7:14) Then⁴⁷ he came up⁴⁸ and touched⁴⁹ the bier,⁵⁰ and those who carried it stood still. He⁵¹ said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!"

(Luk 7:15) So⁵² the dead man⁵³ sat up and began to speak, and Jesus⁵⁴ gave him back⁵⁵ to his mother.

(Luk 7:16) Fear⁵⁶ seized them all, and they began to glorify⁵⁷ God, saying, "A great prophet⁵⁸ has appeared⁵⁹ among us!" and "God has come to help⁶⁰ his people!"

(Luk 7:17) This⁶¹ report⁶² about Jesus⁶³ circulated⁶⁴ throughout⁶⁵ Judea and all the surrounding country.

(Luk 7:18) ***Jesus and John the Baptist***

John's⁶⁶ disciples informed him about all these things. So⁶⁷ John called⁶⁸ two of his disciples (Luk 7:19) and sent them to Jesus⁶⁹ to ask,⁷⁰ "Are you the one who is to come,⁷¹ or should we look for another?"

(Luk 7:20) When⁷² the men came to Jesus,⁷³ they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask,⁷⁴ 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?' " ⁷⁵

(Luk 7:21) At that very time⁷⁶ Jesus⁷⁷ cured many people of diseases, sicknesses,⁷⁸ and evil spirits, and granted⁷⁹

sight to many who were blind.

(Luk 7:22) So⁸⁰ he answered them,⁸¹ "Go tell⁸² John what you have seen and heard:⁸³ The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the⁸⁴ deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news proclaimed to them.

(Luk 7:23) Blessed is anyone⁸⁵ who takes no offense at me."

(Luk 7:24) When⁸⁶ John's messengers had gone, Jesus⁸⁷ began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness⁸⁸ to see? A reed shaken by the wind?⁸⁹

(Luk 7:25) What⁹⁰ did you go out to see? A man dressed in fancy⁹¹ clothes?⁹² Look, those who wear fancy clothes and live in luxury⁹³

are in kings' courts!⁹⁴

(Luk 7:26) What did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more⁹⁵ than a prophet.

(Luk 7:27) This is the one about whom it is written, ' ***Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, ⁹⁶ who will prepare your way before you.***'⁹⁷

(Luk 7:28) I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater⁹⁸ than John.⁹⁹ Yet the one who is least¹⁰⁰ in the kingdom of God¹⁰¹ is greater than he is."

(Luk 7:29) (Now¹⁰² all the people who heard this, even the tax collectors,¹⁰³ acknowledged¹⁰⁴ God's justice, because they had been baptized¹⁰⁵ with John's baptism.

(Luk 7:30) However, the Pharisees¹⁰⁶ and the experts in religious law¹⁰⁷ rejected God's purpose¹⁰⁸ for themselves, because they had not been baptized¹⁰⁹ by John.¹¹⁰)¹¹¹

(Luk 7:31) "To what then should I compare the people¹¹² of this generation, and what are they like?

(Luk 7:32) They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to one another,¹¹³

'We played the flute for you, yet you did not dance;¹¹⁴

we wailed in mourning,¹¹⁵ yet you did not weep.'

(Luk 7:33) For John the Baptist has come¹¹⁶ eating no bread and drinking no wine,¹¹⁷ and you say, 'He has a demon!'¹¹⁸

(Luk 7:34) The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him,¹¹⁹ a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'¹²⁰

(Luk 7:35) But wisdom is vindicated¹²¹ by all her children."¹²²

(Luk 7:36) ***Jesus' Anointing***

Now one of the Pharisees¹²³ asked Jesus¹²⁴ to have dinner with him, so¹²⁵ he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table.¹²⁶

(Luk 7:37) Then¹²⁷ when a woman of that town, who was a sinner, learned that Jesus¹²⁸ was dining¹²⁹ at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar¹³⁰ of perfumed oil.¹³¹

(Luk 7:38) As¹³² she stood¹³³ behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. She¹³⁴ wiped them with her hair,¹³⁵ kissed¹³⁶ them,¹³⁷ and anointed¹³⁸ them with the perfumed oil.

(Luk 7:39) Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this,¹³⁹ he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet,¹⁴⁰ he would know who and what kind of woman¹⁴¹ this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner."

(Luk 7:40) So¹⁴² Jesus answered him,¹⁴³ "Simon, I have something to say to you." He replied,¹⁴⁴ "Say it, Teacher."

(Luk 7:41) "A certain creditor¹⁴⁵ had two debtors; one owed him¹⁴⁶ five hundred silver coins,¹⁴⁷ and the other fifty.

(Luk 7:42) When they could not pay, he canceled¹⁴⁸ the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

(Luk 7:43) Simon answered,¹⁴⁹ "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled."¹⁵⁰ Jesus¹⁵¹ said to him, "You have judged rightly."

(Luk 7:44) Then,¹⁵² turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house. You gave me no water for my feet,¹⁵³ but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

(Luk 7:45) You gave me no kiss of greeting,¹⁵⁴ but from the time I entered she has not stopped kissing my feet.

(Luk 7:46) You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet¹⁵⁵ with perfumed oil.

(Luk 7:47) Therefore I tell you, her sins, which were many, are forgiven, thus she loved much;¹⁵⁶ but the one who is forgiven little loves little."

(Luk 7:48) Then¹⁵⁷ Jesus¹⁵⁸ said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."¹⁵⁹

(Luk 7:49) But¹⁶⁰ those who were at the table¹⁶¹ with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"

(Luk 7:50) He¹⁶² said to the woman, "Your faith¹⁶³ has saved you;¹⁶⁴ go in peace."

(Luk 8:1) ***Jesus' Ministry and the Help of Women***

Some time¹ afterward² he went on through towns³ and villages, preaching and proclaiming the good news⁴ of the kingdom of God.⁵ The⁶ twelve were with him,
(Guzik)

Luk 8:1-56

Luke 8 - THE IMPORTANCE AND POWER OF JESUS' WORD

A. The parable of the soils.

1. (Luk_8:1-3) Women who ministered to Jesus.

Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve *were* with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities; Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's

steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

a. **Preaching and bringing glad tidings:** Is “preaching the good news.” Jesus’ message to people was good news, not bad news.

b. **And certain women:** Why does Luke specifically mention the women who followed and served Jesus?

Because in that day, Rabbis generally refused to teach women and almost always gave them an inferior place - but not Jesus.

i. Isn’t it interesting that all of Jesus’ enemies were men?

ii. One of these women was **Mary called Magdalene:** “The Christian imagination has made free with Mary Magdalene, mostly seeing her as a beautiful woman whom Jesus had saved from an immoral life. There is nothing whatever in the sources to indicate this.”

(Morris)

c. **And many others who provided for Him from their substance:** We see the real humble nature of Jesus, who was willing to make Himself dependent upon others. He didn’t have to; He could have just created all the money He would ever need. But was godly enough to receive from others.

i. Many of us are too proud to receive help from others. But sometimes the ability to humbly receive is a better measure of Jesus in our lives than the ability to give. Giving often puts us in a higher place, but receiving may put us in a lower place.

2. (Luk_8:4-8) The parable of the soils.

And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it

and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

a. **He spoke by a parable:** The word **parable** comes from the idea of “to set along side.” As Jesus used parables, it means to set a spiritual truth along side a daily truth of living.

b. **A sower went out to sow his seed:** In this parable, Jesus described something they were all familiar with - a farmer casting seed on the ground, and the seed falling on different types of soil.

i. Why wouldn’t the farmer only cast seed on good soil? Some fell on the pathway by accident (**some fell by the wayside**), but most of the seed was sown on ground that was plowed *after* the seed was cast. Therefore, you didn’t know where rocks were or where thorns might grow.

c. The seed fell on three areas without lasting success: on the pathway (**the wayside**), on the rocky ground (**on rock**), and on the thorny ground (**among thorns**). But some of the seed fell on **good ground**.

d. Though this is commonly called *the parable of the sower*, it should really be called *the parable of the soils*. The difference is never the *seed*, but on the kind of *soil* it lands on.

3. (Luk_8:9-10) The purpose of parables.

Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’”

a. **To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables:** As Jesus used them, parables were more like puzzles or riddles than illustrations. Only those who had the right “key” could understand them. The disciples, who wanted the things of God, were **given to know the**

mysteries of the kingdom - they could be spoken to plainly. But often, others were taught **in parables**.

i. **The mysteries of the kingdom of God:** In the Bible, a *mystery* isn't something you can't figure out. It is something that you would never know unless God revealed it to you. In the Biblical sense of the idea, you may know exactly what a mystery is, yet it is still a mystery, because you would not have known unless God revealed it.

b. **Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand:** By quoting this passage from Isa_6:9, Jesus explained that He offered His hearers the opportunity to dig deep and find the truth, or to turn a blind eye to an interesting story. This would avoid a greater condemnation for having rejected a clearly understood truth.

i. "So, that their guilt may not accumulate, the Lord no longer addresses them directly in explicit teachings during the period immediately preceding His crucifixion, but in parables."

(Geldenhuis)

c. In light of this, how blessed are those who *do* understand the parables of Jesus. Not only do they gain the benefit of the spiritual truth illustrated they also display some measure of responsiveness to the Holy Spirit.

4. (Luk_8:11-15) Jesus explains the parable.

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with patience."

a. **The seed is the word of God:** 1Pe_1:23 says that we have *been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.*

i. The natural tendency is for the audience to critique the preacher. But here, Jesus the preacher is critiquing His audience. How they will hear is the issue.

b. **Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved:** Some people are like the ground on the pathway. They allow no room for the seed of the word in their lives - it never enters.

i. This is Satan's preferred result. His desire is that the word take no place in a person's life, so they do not run the "risk" of being fruitful to God.

c. **But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away:** Some people are like the ground that is rocky, but covered with a thin layer of topsoil. They receive the seed of the word with a flash of enthusiasm that quickly burns out.

d. **Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity:** Some people are like the seed that fell among the thorns. They receive the word but allow the interests and cares of this world choke it out.

e. **The ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience:** Some people are like the good ground, and receive the word **with a good and noble heart**. They **keep** the word, and thus bear fruit, thus fulfilling the purpose of the seed.

f. These four categories apply to those who hear the gospel of salvation, but they also apply to those who are already

saved who continually hear the word of God. How do you hear it?

o Do you let Satan take it right away?

o Do you take it but then immediately ignore it?

o Do you allow the cares of this world to make your hearing of the word of no effect?

o Do you keep the word and see it bear fruit in your life?

B. The responsibility of those who receive the word.

1. (Luk_8:16-17) They are responsible to expose and publish the truth - that is, the word of God.

“No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts *it* under a bed, but sets *it* on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor *anything* hidden that will not be known and come to light.”

a. **No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand:** Truth, by its nature was meant to be revealed; and God promises that it will be.

b. **That those who enter may see the light:** If you have the truth of God, you have a solemn responsibility to spread that truth in whatever way God gives you opportunity, even as someone who has the cure for a life-threatening disease has the moral responsibility to spread that cure. God didn't light your lamp so that it would be hidden.

i. One must either spread the word itself, or spread the influence of God's word by bringing others to a place where they will hear it; and you really should be doing both.

2. (Luk_8:18) When we hear the word, we become accountable; so we must take care how we hear.

“Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him *more* will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.”

a. **For whoever has, to him more will be given:** Jesus reminds us that spiritual growth follows momentum, positive or negative - when we have the godly habits of receiving the

word and living it, more is built on to that. When we lose those godly habits, they are extremely difficult to get back.

b. **Therefore take heed how you hear:** If we want to hear more from God, we must obey what we have already heard.

3. (Luk_8:19-21) We show that we are close to Jesus by hearing and obeying His word.

Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. And it was told Him *by some*, who said, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.” But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”

a. **Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd:** We might have expected that Jesus’ family would have special privileges before Him; it almost surprises us that they do not.

b. **My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it:** Jesus indicates that His closest family is made up of those who hear and obey God’s word. How can I draw close to God? By hearing His word and doing it. You can pray or sing or fast all day long, but if you are not hearing His word and doing it, you are not really drawing close to God.

c. **Brothers . . . brothers . . . brothers:** Jesus plainly had many brothers and sisters. The Roman Catholic idea of the perpetual virginity of Mary contradicts the plain meaning of the Bible.

i. The **brothers** of Jesus never seemed to be supportive of His ministry before His death and resurrection (Joh_7:5, Mar_3:21).

C. Jesus calms the storm.

1. (Luk_8:22-23) The stormy Sea of Galilee.

Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.” And they launched out. But as

they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

a. **He fell asleep:** Jesus' true humanity is shown by His sleep on the boat. He became weary, and would sometimes need to catch sleep wherever He could.

b. **A windstorm came down on the lake:** The Sea of Galilee is well known for its sudden, violent storms. The severity of this storm is evident in the fact that the disciples (many of which were experienced fishermen on this very sea) were terrified (Mar_4:40).

2. (Luk_8:24-25) Jesus calms the storm.

And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. But He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"

a. **He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water:** Jesus didn't merely quiet the wind and the sea; He **rebuked the winds and the sea**. This, along with the disciple's great fear, and what Jesus will encounter at His destination, gives the sense that Satan had a significant hand in this storm.

b. **Where is your faith?** Jesus doesn't say, "Wow, what a storm." Instead, He says, "**Where is your faith?** " The storm could not disturb Jesus, but the unbelief of His disciples could and did.

i. How were they unbelieving? It was not that they were afraid of a fearful circumstance, but because Jesus had said *Let us go over to the other side of the lake* (Luk_8:22). Jesus didn't say, "Let's do the best we can and maybe we'll all drown."

ii. Just because you have a tough time in a tough circumstance doesn't mean that you are walking in unbelief.

Unbelief is when you ignore or reject a promise or command of God given to your situation.

iii. The disciples also should have known that God would not allow the Messiah to perish in a boat crossing the Sea of Galilee. What? Do we think that the story of Jesus would end with Him drowning?

c. **And they were afraid, and marveled:** The total calm of the sea should have filled them with peace, but instead, they were just as afraid when He calmed the storm as when they were in its midst.

d. The disciples ask a good question: **Who can this be?** It can only be the Lord, Jehovah, who only has this power and authority: *O Lord God of hosts, who is mighty like You, O Lord? Your faithfulness surrounds You. You rule the raging of the sea; when waves rise, You still them.* (Psa_89:8-9)

e. This account shows the abiding care Jesus has for His people. "There are many Christians today who seem to think the boat is going down! I am tired of the wailing of some of my friends who take that view.

The boat cannot go down. Jesus is on board." (Morgan)

D. The deliverance of the Gaderene demoniac.

1. (Luk_8:26-29) The man is described.

Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!" For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

a. This is the most detailed description of a demon possessed man we have in the Bible. It is the classic profile

of demonic possession. The man has been demon possessed **for a long time**; the effect was to cause this man to live like a sub-human, wild animal (**wore not clothes . . . in the tombs . . . bound with chains and shackles . . . broke the bonds . . . driven by the demon into the wilderness**).

i. Curiously, many Christians think that this is how the Holy Spirit works - by overwhelming the operations of one's body, and making one do strange and grotesque things.

b. When this man came to Jesus (**there met Him** means that Jesus did not seek out the man), Jesus **commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man**. The man could not, or would not deliver himself, but Jesus had all authority over **the unclean spirit**.

c. When the man cried out **What have I to do with You . . . I beg You, do not torment me!** it is the demonic spirit speaking, not the man possessed. The demon did not want to leave his "host."

i. Demonic possession is when a demonic spirit *resides* in a human body, and at times will exhibit its own personality through the personality of the host body.

ii. Demonic possession is a reality today, though we must guard against either *ignoring* demonic activity or *over-emphasizing* supposed demonic activity.

iii. We are not told specifically how a person become demon possessed, other than the inference that it must be by some sort of invitation, whether offered knowingly or not.

iv. Superstition, fortunetelling, "harmless" occult games and practices, spiritism, New Age deception, magic, drug taking and other things open doors of deception to the believer, and real demonic danger to the unbeliever.

v. People often get involved in the occult or demonic things because there is something there that seems to *work*. Unfortunately it is not some *thing* at work, but a some *one* at work - a demonic spirit.

d. Why do demons want to inhabit bodies? For the same reason why the vandal wants a spray can, or a violent man wants a gun - a body is a weapon that they can use in their attack against God.

i. Demons also attack men because they hate the image of God in man, so they try to mar that image, by debasing man and making him grotesque.

ii. Demons have the same goal in Christians (to wreck the image of God) but their tactics are restricted; in regard to Christians, demonic spirits were “disarmed” by Jesus’ work on the cross (Col_2:15), though they can both deceive and intimidate Christians, binding them with fear and unbelief.

2. (Luk_8:30-33) Jesus demonstrates His authority over evil spirits.

Jesus asked him, saying, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

a. **What is your name?** Why did Jesus ask for a name? Probably so that we would know the full extent of the problem, knowing that the man was filled with many demons (**Legion**) not just one.

i. A Roman legion usually consisted of six thousand men. This does not mean that the man was inhabited with six thousand demons, but that he had many.

b. **They begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss:** The demons inhabiting this man did not want to be imprisoned in the **abyss**, which is the *bottomless pit* described in Rev_9:11. Apparently, it is some kind of “holding cell” for certain demonic spirits.

c. **The demons went out of the man and entered the swine:** The idea that demons may inhabit the bodies of animals seems strange, but the idea is also shown in Genesis 3. It was also appropriate that these demons be cast into **swine**, being non-kosher animals.

d. **The herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned:** The destructive nature of demonic spirits is shown by their effect on the swine. They are like their leader, Satan whose desire is to *steal, and to kill, and to destroy* (Joh_10:10).

3. (Luk_8:34-37) The reaction of the bystanders to the deliverance of the demon possessed man.

When those who fed *them* saw what had happened, they fled and told *it* in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. They also who had seen *it* told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned.

a. **They were afraid . . . and they were seized with great fear:** They were more afraid of a free man than a possessed man; when they see the man in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus.

b. **Then the whole multitude . . . asked Him to depart:** They didn't seem to mind having this demon-possessed, tormented man in their midst, but they did mind having Jesus around - so they asked Him to leave - *and He did!*

i. "It is clear that they attached far more value to their earthly possessions than to the salvation of the possessed man and their own salvation as well." (Geldenhuys)

c. When people are more afraid of what Jesus will do in their lives than what Satan is doing in their lives right now, they

often push Jesus away - and He may very well leave if you ask Him to.

4. (Luk_8:38-39) The reaction of the man who had been delivered from demons.

Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

a. **Begged Him that he might be with Him:** First, this formerly demon-possessed man simply sat at the feet of Jesus (Luk_8:35). But then he just wanted to **be with** Jesus.

i. This man didn't only want what Jesus could do for him; the true change in his heart was shown by that he wanted Jesus Himself.

b. **But Jesus sent him away:** Why wouldn't Jesus let this man follow Him and be with Him? Because Jesus knew that he had a more important ministry with his own family and community.

i. Many who desire to be used greatly by God should first give attention to being used by God right in their own house; though this truly is the hardest place to minister.

c. This man had a great message to tell: **what great things Jesus had done for him**. This is a gospel everyone should be able to preach.

E. A woman healed, a girl raised from the dead.

1. (Luk_8:40-42) A father's plea that Jesus would heal his only daughter.

So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him.

a. **And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house:** When the centurion came to Jesus in a similar situation (Luk_7:1-10), Jesus didn't even go to the centurion's house to heal the servant - He simply pronounced him healed from a distance.

b. **But as He went:** Jesus did not demand that Jarius show the same faith as the centurion. Jesus responds to the faith that we have.

2. (Luk_8:43-48) A woman healed of her hemorrhage.

Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

a. **A woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years:**

This woman was in a desperate condition. Her bleeding made her ceremonially and socially unclean, and this would be quite a burden to live under for 12 years.

i. According to the Jewish ideas of the time, if this woman touched anyone, she imparted her uncleanness to them, an uncleanness that would not allow them to take part in any aspect of Israel's worship.

ii. Luke the physician also tells us that she had **spent all her livelihood on physicians**.

He knew how doctor bills could take all that you had!

b. Came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped:

When she touched His garment, Jesus wasn't made unclean, the woman was made whole.

When we come to Jesus with our sin, and lay it upon Him, it doesn't make Him a sinner, but it makes us clean.

i. How could this woman be healed by touching **the border of Jesus' garment**? Because even though her faith had elements of err and superstition, she believed in the healing power of Jesus, and the border of His garment served as a point of contact for that faith.

ii. There are many things that we could find wrong with this woman's faith; but more than anything, her faith was in *Jesus*, and the object of faith is much more important than the quality of faith.

c. I perceived power going out from Me: When the woman touched Jesus and was immediately healed, Jesus "felt" something happen. Jesus had a sense that someone had just been healed.

d. Because this woman was embarrassed, and thought that because of her uncleanness, no one would let her touch Jesus, she tried to do it secretly. But God always brings His work out into the open, even if it starts secretly.

e. The woman saw that she was not hidden: This probably means that Jesus was looking right at her when He said, "**Somebody touched Me.**" The woman *had* to come forward, because Jesus knew who she was.

i. It isn't hard to see the woman, in frightened embarrassment, speaking quickly, describing the whole situation to Jesus, and being so glad she was healed.

ii. Jesus doesn't correct her superstitious faith; her encounter with Jesus Himself has done that. Jesus wants to encourage her and build up her faith.

f. What was Jarius thinking while Jesus took the time to minister to this woman's need? God always seems slow to the sufferer!

3. (Luk_8:49-50) Jesus calls Jarius to a radical faith with a radical promise.

While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead.

Do not trouble the Teacher." But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well."

a. **Your daughter is dead:** We can imagine how Jarius' heart sank when he heard this. He must have thought, "I knew this was taking too long! I knew Jesus shouldn't have wasted His time on this silly woman!"

i. We sometimes think that God has waited too long, and that things are beyond fixing. But God always knows what He is doing.

b. **But when Jesus heard it, He answered him:** Jesus gives Jarius two things to do. First, He says **do not be afraid**. Second, He says **only believe**. We often can't really believe in Jesus until we give Him all of our fears and concerns.

c. But the *only* thing that Jarius had to believe in was Jesus' word. *Everything* else told him that his daughter was gone forever. This is both the *best place* to be and the *hardest place* to be.

4. (Luk_8:51-56) Jesus raises the little girl from the dead.

When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise."

Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given *something* to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

a. **All wept and mourned for her:** In that day, it was customary to hire professional mourners to add to the atmosphere of grief and pain at a death. But the professional mourners could only grieve superficially.

They quickly turned from weeping to scornful laughter (**they ridiculed Him**).

b. **He put them all outside:** Jesus will have nothing to do with these people who don't believe His promises; and He drives them out so that they won't discourage the faith of Jarius.

c. **Little girl, arise:** Jesus, with the authority of God, speaks to the girl as if she were alive, because God *gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did* (Rom_4:17), and she is raised from the dead.

d. Jesus didn't fail Jarius; and He didn't fail the woman who needed healing. But in ministering to both, He needed to stretch the faith of Jarius extra far.

(Luk 8:2) and also some women⁷ who had been healed of evil spirits and disabilities:⁸ Mary⁹ (called Magdalene), from whom seven demons had gone out,

(Luk 8:3) and Joanna the wife of Cuza¹⁰ (Herod's¹¹ household manager),¹² Susanna, and many others who provided for them¹³ out of their own resources.

(Luk 8:4) ***The Parable of the Sower***

While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus¹⁴ from one town after another,¹⁵ he spoke to them¹⁶ in a parable:

(Luk 8:5) "A sower went out to sow¹⁷ his seed.¹⁸ And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled on, and the wild birds¹⁹ devoured it.

(Luk 8:6) Other seed fell on rock,²⁰ and when it came up, it withered because it had no moisture.

(Luk 8:7) Other seed fell among the thorns,²¹ and they grew up with it and choked²² it.

(Luk 8:8) But²³ other seed fell on good soil and grew,²⁴ and it produced a hundred times as much grain."²⁵ As he said this,²⁶ he called out, "The one who has ears to hear had better listen!"²⁷

(Luk 8:9) Then²⁸ his disciples asked him what this parable meant.²⁹

(Luk 8:10) He³⁰ said, "You have been given³¹ the opportunity to know³² the secrets³³ of the kingdom of God,³⁴ but for others they are in parables, so that ***although they see they may not see, and although they hear they may not understand.***³⁵

(Luk 8:11) "Now the parable means³⁶ this: The seed is the word of God.

(Luk 8:12) Those along the path are the ones who have heard; then the devil³⁷ comes and takes away the word³⁸ from their hearts, so that they may not believe³⁹ and be saved.

(Luk 8:13) Those⁴⁰ on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while,⁴¹ but⁴² in a time of testing⁴³ fall away.⁴⁴

(Luk 8:14) As for the seed that⁴⁵ fell among thorns, these are the ones who hear, but⁴⁶ as they go on their way they are choked⁴⁷ by the worries and riches and pleasures of life,⁴⁸ and their fruit does not mature.⁴⁹

(Luk 8:15) But as for the seed that landed on good soil, these are the ones who, after hearing⁵⁰ the word, cling to it⁵¹ with an honest and good⁵² heart, and bear fruit with steadfast endurance.⁵³

(Luk 8:16) ***Showing the Light***

"No one lights⁵⁴ a lamp⁵⁵ and then covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand so that those who come in can see the light.⁵⁶

(Luk 8:17) For nothing is hidden⁵⁷ that will not be revealed,⁵⁸ and nothing concealed that will not be made

known and brought to light.

(Luk 8:18) So listen carefully,⁵⁹ for whoever has will be given more, but⁶⁰ whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has⁶¹ will be taken from him."

(Luk 8:19) ***Jesus' True Family***

Now Jesus'⁶² mother and his brothers⁶³ came to him, but⁶⁴ they could not get near him because of the crowd.

(Luk 8:20) So⁶⁵ he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you."

(Luk 8:21) But he replied⁶⁶ to them, "My mother and my brothers are those⁶⁷ who hear the word of God and do it."⁶⁸

(Luk 8:22) ***Stilling of a Storm***

One⁶⁹ day Jesus⁷⁰ got into a boat⁷¹ with his disciples and said to them, "Let's go across to the other side of the lake." So⁷² they set out, (Luk 8:23) and as they sailed he fell asleep. Now a violent windstorm⁷³ came down on the lake,⁷⁴ and the boat⁷⁵ started filling up with water, and they were in danger.

(Luk 8:24) They⁷⁶ came⁷⁷ and woke him, saying, "Master, Master,⁷⁸ we are about to die!" So⁷⁹ he got up and rebuked⁸⁰ the wind and the raging waves;⁸¹ they died down, and it was calm.

(Luk 8:25) Then⁸² he said to them, "Where is your faith?"⁸³ But they were afraid and amazed,⁸⁴ saying to one another, "Who then is this? He commands even the winds and the water,⁸⁵ and they obey him!"

(Luk 8:26) ***Healing of a Demoniac***

So⁸⁶ they sailed over to the region of the Gerasenes,⁸⁷ which is opposite⁸⁸ Galilee.

(Luk 8:27) As⁸⁹ Jesus⁹⁰ stepped ashore,⁹¹ a certain man from the town⁹² met him who was possessed by demons.⁹³ For a long time this man⁹⁴ had worn no clothes and had not lived in a house, but among⁹⁵ the tombs.

(Luk 8:28) When he saw⁹⁶ Jesus, he cried out, fell⁹⁷ down before him, and shouted with a loud voice, "Leave me alone,⁹⁸ Jesus, Son of the Most High⁹⁹ God! I beg you, do not torment¹⁰⁰ me!"

(Luk 8:29) For Jesus¹⁰¹ had started commanding¹⁰² the evil¹⁰³ spirit to come out of the man. (For it had seized him many times, so¹⁰⁴

he would be bound with chains and shackles¹⁰⁵ and kept under guard. But¹⁰⁶ he would break the restraints and be driven by the demon into deserted¹⁰⁷ places.)¹⁰⁸

(Luk 8:30) Jesus then¹⁰⁹ asked him, "What is your name?" He¹¹⁰ said, "Legion,"¹¹¹ because many demons had entered him.

(Luk 8:31) And they began to beg¹¹² him not to order¹¹³ them to depart into the abyss.¹¹⁴

(Luk 8:32) Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside,¹¹⁵ and the demonic spirits¹¹⁶ begged Jesus¹¹⁷ to let them go into them. He gave them permission.¹¹⁸

(Luk 8:33) So¹¹⁹ the demons came out of the man and went into the pigs, and the herd of pigs¹²⁰ rushed down the steep slope into the lake and drowned.

(Luk 8:34) When¹²¹ the herdsmen saw what had happened, they ran off and spread the news¹²² in the town¹²³ and countryside.

(Luk 8:35) So¹²⁴ the people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus. They¹²⁵ found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid.

(Luk 8:36) Those¹²⁶ who had seen it told them how the man who had been demon-possessed had been healed.¹²⁷

(Luk 8:37) Then¹²⁸ all the people of the Gerasenes¹²⁹ and the surrounding region¹³⁰ asked Jesus¹³¹ to leave them alone,¹³² for they were seized with great fear.¹³³ So¹³⁴ he got into the boat and left.¹³⁵

(Luk 8:38) The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go¹³⁶ with him, but Jesus¹³⁷ sent him away,

saying, (Luk 8:39) "Return to your home,¹³⁸ and declare¹³⁹ what God has done for you."¹⁴⁰ So¹⁴¹ he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole town¹⁴² what Jesus¹⁴³ had done for him.

(Luk 8:40) ***Restoration and Healing***

Now when Jesus returned,¹⁴⁴ the crowd welcomed him, because they were all waiting for him.

(Luk 8:41) Then¹⁴⁵ a man named Jairus, who was a ruler¹⁴⁶ of the synagogue,¹⁴⁷ came up. Falling¹⁴⁸ at Jesus' feet, he pleaded¹⁴⁹ with him to come to his house, (Luk 8:42) because he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying.¹⁵⁰

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds pressed¹⁵¹ around him. (Luk 8:43) Now¹⁵² a woman was there who had been suffering from a hemorrhage¹⁵³ for twelve years¹⁵⁴ but could not be healed by anyone.

(Luk 8:44) She¹⁵⁵ came up behind Jesus¹⁵⁶ and touched the edge¹⁵⁷ of his cloak,¹⁵⁸ and at once the bleeding¹⁵⁹ stopped.

(Luk 8:45) Then¹⁶⁰ Jesus asked,¹⁶¹ "Who was it who touched me?" When they all denied it, Peter¹⁶² said, "Master, the crowds are surrounding you and pressing¹⁶³ against you!"

(Luk 8:46) But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I know that power has gone out¹⁶⁴ from me."

(Luk 8:47) When¹⁶⁵ the woman saw that she could not escape notice,¹⁶⁶ she came trembling and fell down before him. In¹⁶⁷ the presence of all the people, she explained why¹⁶⁸ she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed.

(Luk 8:48) Then¹⁶⁹ he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well.¹⁷⁰ Go in peace."

(Luk 8:49) While he was still speaking, someone from the synagogue ruler's¹⁷¹ house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer."

(Luk 8:50) But when Jesus heard this, he told¹⁷² him, "Do not be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed."¹⁷³

(Luk 8:51) Now when he came to the house, Jesus¹⁷⁴ did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John,¹⁷⁵ and James, and the child's father and mother.

(Luk 8:52) Now they were all¹⁷⁶ wailing and mourning¹⁷⁷ for her, but he said, "Stop your weeping; she is not dead but asleep."

(Luk 8:53) And they began making fun¹⁷⁸ of him, because they knew¹⁷⁹ that she was dead.¹⁸⁰

(Luk 8:54) But Jesus¹⁸¹ gently took her by the hand and said,¹⁸² "Child, get up."

(Luk 8:55) Her¹⁸³ spirit returned,¹⁸⁴ and she got up immediately. Then¹⁸⁵ he told them to give her something to eat.

(Luk 8:56) Her¹⁸⁶ parents were astonished, but he ordered them to tell no one¹⁸⁷ what had happened.

(Luk 9:1) ***The Sending of the Twelve Apostles***

After¹ Jesus² called³ the twelve⁴ together, he gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure⁵ diseases, (Guzik)

Luk 9:1-62

Luke 9 - THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS PREACHED AND DISPLAYED

A. The apostles are sent to preach and heal.

1. (Luk_9:1-2) Jesus calls them and sends them forth.

Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

a. In the gospel of John, Jesus said *As the Father has sent Me, I also send you* (Joh_20:21). Here Jesus sends out His

disciples to do the same things that Jesus did: **to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.**

b. **To preach the kingdom of God:** What does it mean to **preach**? It simply means to proclaim, to tell others in the sense of announcing news to them. Some of the best, most effective preaching never happens inside a church; it happens when people are one-on-one with others telling about what Jesus has done.

i. Preaching **the kingdom of God** is also simple; we are here to announce that there is a King and we are in His kingdom!

ii. The Kingdom that Jesus brought needed preaching, for it was not the same Kingdom that most of the Jewish people of His day expected.

c. **To heal the sick:** This means that God wanted to use the disciples to bring healing. God wants to do more than save souls, He wants to minister to the whole person.

d. **Gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases:** God never tells us to do something without giving us the ability and the right to do it.

i. This **power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases** is vitally connected with preaching the gospel. It shouldn't surprise us to see the two going together.

2. (Luk_9:3-6) The Kingdom they preach is marked by simplicity, urgency, and sincerity.

And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them." So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

a. **Take nothing for the journey:** The disciples didn't need fancy equipment to preach a simple message.

Too much “stuff” would get in the way of their urgent message.

i. There was a rule among the rabbis of the day that you could not enter the temple area with a staff, shoes, or a moneybag, because you wanted to avoid even the appearance of being engaged in any other business than the service of the Lord. The disciples are engaged in such holy work (preaching the gospel and bringing God’s healing) that they can’t give the

impression that they have any other motive.

b. As well, travelling light kept them dependent upon God. They had to trust the Lord for everything if they didn’t take much with them. If the preacher isn’t trusting God, how can he tell others to trust Him?

i. “The forbidden *bag* may be the kind frequently used by itinerant philosophers and religious mendicants for begging.” (Liefeld)

c. **And whoever will not receive you:** Their job as preachers wasn’t to change people’s minds. They were to persuasively present the message, but if they didn’t receive it, they didn’t receive it - and they could leave, and **shake the very dust from your feet** as they left.

i. If Jews had to go in or through a Gentile city, as they left they would shake the dust off their feet as a gesture saying, “we don’t want to take anything from this Gentile city with us.”

Essentially, Jesus is telling them to regard a Jewish city that rejects their message as if it were a Gentile city.

d. **So they departed:** They actually did it! We can hear Jesus’ word to us all day long, but something is missing until we do it.

3. (Luk_9:7-9) Herod hears of Jesus’ ministry and is perplexed.

Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him; and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, and by some that Elijah had

appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen again.

Herod said, “John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?” So he sought to see Him.

a. **It was said by some that John had risen from the dead:** The last time we saw John the Baptist in Luke was back in Luk_7:18-23. John was in prison and wondered if Jesus really was the Messiah. Here, Luke tells us that Herod had John executed in prison, because John rebuked Herod about his sin with his brother’s wife (Mat_14:1-12).

b. **Herod said, “John I have beheaded”** : Herod’s confusion comes from his own guilty conscience. It is hard to see clearly who Jesus is when we are in sin and rebellion.

4. (Luk_9:10) The apostles return.

And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

a. **And the apostles:** When they left Jesus in Luk_9:1, they were called *disciples* - that is, “learners.” When they come back after their preaching mission, they are called **apostles** - that is, “those sent with authority and a message.”

b. **Told Him all that they had done:** Jesus wanted to know how they had done. Jesus is concerned with the results of our work for Him.

c. Jesus wanted to take them **aside privately into a deserted place**, to minister to their needs.

Whenever we are serving Jesus as He directs us, He always wants to minister to us.

5. (Luk_9:11-17) The feeding of the 5,000.

But when the multitudes knew *it*, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing. When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, “Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here.” But He said

to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people." For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty." And they did so, and made them all sit down. Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke *them*, and gave *them* to the disciples to set before the multitude. So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.

a. **Send the multitude away:** The disciples saw the crowd as a bother; after all, didn't they want to spend special time with Jesus? But Jesus saw the crowd in terms of love, care, and compassion.

b. Jesus wants to minister to the crowd; not only spiritually (**spoke to them about the kingdom of God**), but also ministering to their physical needs (**healed those who had need of healing . . . You give them something to eat**). He genuinely loved the multitude.

i. Jesus doesn't only care for your spiritual needs; He has a real concern for your physical and material needs as well. It isn't unspiritual to look to God in these areas.

c. **He blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude:** When Jesus **blessed** before the meal, He wasn't blessing the food. He blessed God for supplying it. The idea of praying before a meal isn't to bless the food; it is to bless - that is, to *thank* - God for blessing us with the food.

d. **So they all ate and were filled:** Jesus miraculously multiplied the loaves and fishes, until far more than 5,000 were fed. Seemingly, the miracle happened in the hands of Jesus, not in hands of the disciples - they simply distributed what Jesus had miraculously provided.

i. If someone left hungry, it was either because they refused the bread from Jesus, or because the apostles didn't

distribute the bread to everyone. Jesus *supplied* plenty for everybody.

e. The assurance that Jesus can provide - even miraculously - for all of our needs should be precious to us; it was to the earliest Christians. On the walls of the catacombs, and other places of early Christian art, loaves and fishes are common pictures.

f. What we have in ourselves to give others is insignificant, but when we put it in Jesus' hands, He can do great things with our gifts and talents to touch the lives of others.

B. The kingdom and the cross.

1. (Luk_9:18-20) Peter's understanding of who Jesus is.

And it happened, as He was alone praying, *that* His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" So they answered and said, "John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God."

a. **As He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him:** This scene begins with Jesus praying, and the disciples joining Him. We don't really know if they joined with Him in prayer, or if they interrupted His time of prayer. But when Jesus was done praying, He asked them a question: **Who do the crowds say that I am?**

i. Why did Jesus ask? Was it because He didn't know? Not at all. He asked because He will use this question as an introduction to a more important follow-up question.

b. **John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again:** People who thought that Jesus was **John the Baptist** didn't know much about Him, because He and John ministered at the same time. But both John and **Elijah** were national reformers who stood up to the corrupt rulers of their day.

i. Perhaps in seeing Jesus as John or Elijah, the people hope for a political messiah, one who will overthrow the corrupt

powers oppressing Israel.

c. **The Christ of God:** Peter knows Jesus better. He knows that Jesus is **the Christ of God**, God's Messiah, the Messiah from the heart of God, not the Messiah from the desire of man.

2. (Luk_9:21-22) Jesus reveals the true nature of His mission. And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."

a. **The Son of Man must suffer many things:** After receiving the polling data, both from the crowds and His own disciples, Jesus now explains what He has really come to do: **suffer, be rejected, be killed, and be raised the third day**. This isn't what His disciples or the crowds wanted!

i. This would be an unbelievable shock to anyone expecting, or hoping, that Jesus was the national and political messiah. It is as if a presidential candidate announced towards the end of his campaign that he is going to Washington to be rejected and executed.

b. **Must suffer many things:** An important word here is **must**. This isn't just a plan or an idea or a prediction; this is the fulfillment of what was planned before the world began for our salvation (1Pe_1:20; Rev_13:8).

i. But the resurrection was as much a **must** as any other aspect of His suffering; Jesus *had* to rise from the dead.

3. (Luk_9:23) Jesus calls everyone wanting to follow Him to do what He will do.

Then He said to *them* all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

a. **Then He said to them all:** It was bad enough for the disciples to hear that Jesus would suffer, be rejected, and die on a cross. Now He tells them that they must do the same thing.

b. **Let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me:** Everybody knew what Jesus meant when He said **take up his cross**. Everyone knew what the cross was: an unrelenting instrument of nothing but death.

i. The cross wasn't about religious ceremonies; it wasn't about traditions and spiritual feelings. The cross was a way to execute people.

ii. We have sanitized and ritualized the cross in these twenty centuries after Jesus. How would we receive it if Jesus said, "walk down death row daily and follow Me"?

iii. Taking up your cross wasn't a journey; it was a one-way trip. There was no return ticketing; it was never a round trip.

c. Jesus makes **deny himself** equal with **take up his cross**. The two phrases express the same idea. The cross wasn't about self-promotion or self-affirmation. The person carrying a cross knew they couldn't save themselves, and that *self* was destined to die.

i. Denying yourself means to live as an others-centered person. Jesus was the only person to do this perfectly, but we are to follow in His steps.

d. **Take up his cross daily:** Jesus makes it clear that He is speaking spiritually when He adds the word **daily**. No one could be crucified literally everyday. But they can have the same attitude as Jesus **daily**.

e. This is following Jesus at its simplest - He carried a cross, He walked down death row; so must those who would follow Him.

4. (Luk_9:24-27) Why we must take up our cross and follow Jesus.

"For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His *own* glory, and *in His* Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell

you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God.”

a. **For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it:** We must follow Jesus this way because it is the only way that we will ever find life. It sounds strange to say “you will never live until you walk down death row with Jesus,” but that is the idea. You can’t gain resurrection life without dying first.

i. You don’t *lose* a seed when you plant it, though it seems dead and buried. In truth, you set it free to be what it was always intended to be.

b. **For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world:** Avoiding the walk down death row with Jesus means that we may gain the **whole world** - and end up losing everything.

i. Jesus Himself had the opportunity to gain the whole world by worshipping Satan

(Luk_4:5-8), but found life and victory in obedience instead.

ii. Amazingly, the people who live this way before Jesus are the ones who are really, genuinely happy. Giving our lives to Jesus all the way, and living as an others-centered person does not take away from our lives, it adds to it.

c. **For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory:** It isn’t easy to walk death row with Jesus. It means that we have to associate ourselves with someone who was despised and executed - but if we are ashamed of Him, He will be ashamed of us.

d. **But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God:** Walking with Jesus doesn’t just mean a life of death and crosses. It also means a life of the power and glory of the kingdom of God. Jesus promised some of His disciples would soon see a glimpse of that power and glory.

C. The Transfiguration.

1. (Luk_9:28-29) Jesus is transfigured before Peter, John, and James.

Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe *became* white *and* glistening.

a. **He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray:** What started as a mountain top prayer meeting quickly changed into the shining forth of the glory of Jesus, and **as He prayed**, Jesus was transformed right before the eyes of the disciples.

i. **White and glistening** translates a word that has the idea of “flashing like lightning.”

Jesus’ entire appearance was transformed in a brilliant radiance of light.

ii. What exactly happened here? Matthew says that Jesus’ *face shone like the sun* (Mat_17:2), and both Matthew and Mark use the word *transfigured* to describe what happened to Jesus.

For this brief time, Jesus took on an appearance more appropriate for the King of Glory than for a humble man.

iii. How did it happen? This was not a *new* miracle, but the temporary pause of an ongoing miracle. The real miracle was that Jesus, most of the time, *could keep* from displaying His glory.

b. Why did Jesus do this, and why at this time? Because Jesus had just told His disciples that He was going the way of the cross, and that they should follow Him spiritually. It would have been easy for them to lose confidence in Jesus after such a “negative” statement. But now, as Jesus displays His glory as King over all God’s Kingdom, the disciples know that Jesus knows what He is doing; if He is to suffer, be rejected and killed, He is still in control

c. Jesus is showing in a dramatic way that cross bearers will be glory receivers. The end isn’t the cross, the end is the glory of God.

2. (Luk_9:30-31) Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus.

And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

a. Why **Moses and Elijah**? Because they represent those who are caught up to God (Jud_1:9 and 2Ki_2:11). Moses represents those who die and go to glory, and Elijah represents those who are caught up to heaven without death (as in 1Th_4:13-18).

b. Also because they represent the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). The sum of Old Testament revelation comes to meet with Jesus at the Mount of Transfiguration.

c. **Moses and Elijah** also figure together in prophecy, because they are likely the witnesses of Rev_11:3-13.

d. What did they talk about? **Moses and Elijah** were interested in the outworking of God's plan through Jesus; they spoke about what Jesus **was about to accomplish at Jerusalem**.

i. We can almost picture Moses and Elijah asking, "Are You really going to do it?" Moses would say, "I offered to be judged in the place of the people, but God wouldn't have it. Can you go through with this, Jesus?" Elijah would add, "I was persecuted terribly by Ahab and Jezebel, and I hated it - sometimes I went into a spiritual tailspin. Can you go through with this, Jesus?"

3. (Luk_9:32-36) Peter's unwise offer to build three tabernacles to honor Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, and the Father's response to that offer.

But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, *that* Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"; not knowing what he said.

While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!" When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.

a. **Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles:** We often get into trouble when we speak like Peter did - **not knowing what he said**. Peter's mistake was in that he put Jesus on an equal level with Moses and Elijah - one tabernacle for each of them!

i. Peter, when he saw Jesus in His glory, must have said to himself: "All right! This is how it should be! Forget this business about suffering, being rejected, and crucified! Let's build some tabernacles so we can live this way with the glorified Jesus all the time."

b. **While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them:** As Peter says this, they are overshadowed with the cloud of God's glory - the Shekinah glory of God. This is the same idea of *overshadow* in Luk_1:35, when the glory of God came upon Mary and she received the child Jesus.

i. **They were fearful as they entered the cloud:** Being in the presence of God's glory in this way was not really a pleasant experience, especially because Peter had just sinned and needed correcting. Sometimes the glory of God is shown in His correction of us.

c. **And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"** The voice from the cloud of glory makes it clear that Jesus is not on the same level as Moses and Elijah. He is the **beloved Son** - so **Hear Him!**

i. With so many voices crying out to us in our modern day, how we need to hear the call to **Hear Him!**

d. **But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen:** After it was all over,

Peter, John and James **told no one** - after all, who would believe them?

i. But the event left a lasting impression on these men. Peter relates what happened in 2Pe_1:16-18, how the voice from God saying, "*This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!* " was still ringing in his ears, confirming who Jesus was.

ii. As impressive as this experience was, it in itself did not change the lives of the disciples as much as being born again did. Being born again by the Spirit of God is the great miracle, the greatest display of the glory of God ever.

D. The glory of God in action.

1. (Luk_9:37-42) Jesus casts out a demon that His disciples were unable to cast out.

Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him.

Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, "Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams *at the mouth*, and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him. So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not."

Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed *him*. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.

a. A spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him:

The boy displays signs that many today would regard as evidence of mental illness, but Jesus perceived that they were caused by demonic possession. Surely, *some* of those we diagnose as mentally ill today are actually demon possessed.

b. I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not: Why could the disciples not cast this demon out, when they had previously had success (Luk_9:1)? There are “ranks” of demonic powers (Eph_6:12), and evidently, some demons are stronger (more stubborn, resistant) than others. In Mat_17:21, Jesus said that their failure was due to a lack of prayer and fasting.

i. It isn't that prayer and fasting make us more “worthy” to cast out demons. The idea is that prayer and fasting draw us closer to the heart of God, and put us more in line with His power.

c. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father: Jesus had no difficulty whatsoever, because He was close to God the Father, and in the flow of the Father's power.

2. (Luk_9:43-45) Jesus reminds His disciples about His mission.

And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, “Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.” But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

a. And they were all amazed at the majesty of God: Jesus had just revealed His glory in two pretty spectacular ways - the transfiguration and the casting out of a difficult demon. Yet, He reminds His disciples that His mission has not changed; He has still come to die on the cross for our sins, and **the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.**

b. But they did not understand this saying: Though they were frequent, these reminders about Jesus' suffering and resurrection were forgotten by the disciples until after His resurrection (Luk_24:6-8).

E. The unusual character of greatness in the Kingdom of God.

1. (Luk_9:46-48) True greatness shows itself in being like a child, and in being the least, not in the popular conceptions of greatness.

Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great."

a. It seems that the favorite debating topic among the disciples was **which of them would be greatest**.

They all counted on Jesus to take over the world as "King Messiah," and the debate was about who was most worthy to be Jesus' chief associate.

b. **And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him:** We think that Jesus should have answered the question, "who is the greatest?" by saying, "Hey dummies - *I'm* the greatest." Instead, Jesus draws their attention to His nature by having them look at a child as an example.

c. Children were regarded more as property than individuals in the Jesus' day. It was understood that they were to be seen and not heard. Jesus says that the way we receive people like this shows how we would receive Him.

i. Children are not threatening; we aren't afraid of meeting a five-year old in a dark alley.

When we have a tough, intimidating presence, we aren't like Jesus.

ii. Children are not good at deceiving; they are pretty miserable failures at fooling their parents. When we are good at hiding ourselves and deceiving others, we aren't like Jesus.

d. **For he who is least among you all will be great:** Jesus then challenges us to be the **least**. The desire to be

praised and to gain recognition should be foreign to a follower of Jesus. Jesus wants us to embrace **least** as a choice, allowing others to be preferred before us, and not because we are forced to be **least**.

2. (Luk_9:49-50) True greatness isn't cliquish.

Now John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us." But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid *him*, for he who is not against us is on our side."

a. **Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us:** This must have been frustrating to the disciples, because it showed that other followers of Jesus were able to cast out demons when they were not (Luk_9:40). No wonder John wanted them to stop!

b. **Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side:** Jesus taught them to have a more generous spirit. There are many that are wrong in some aspect of their presentation or teaching, yet they still set forth Jesus in some manner. Let God deal with them. Those who are not against a Biblical Jesus are still **on our side**, at least in some way.

i. Paul saw many men preaching Christ from many motives, some of them evil - yet he could rejoice that Christ was being preached (Php_1:15-18).

3. (Luk_9:51-56) True greatness is marked by mercy, not judgment.

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume

them, just as Elijah did?" But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save *them*." And they went to another village.

a. **He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem:** This is the beginning of a new section of the gospel.

Jesus begins His long, final journey towards Jerusalem, with steadfastness fitting the difficulty of the task ahead of Him.

i. There are two kinds of courage - the courage of moment, which requires no previous

thought, and a "planned" courage, which sees the difficulty ahead and steadfastly marches towards it. Jesus had this kind of courage; He could see the cross in the horizon, but still **steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.**

b. **They entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him:**

Because Jesus was going to Jerusalem, these particular Samaritans did not welcome Jesus. They didn't have good relations with the Jews, and were prejudiced against them.

c. **Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?** When the disciples desired to call down fire from heaven upon them (as if they could!), Jesus shows them that His mission was not **destroy men's lives, but to save them.**

i. Being like Jesus means being merciful to others, instead of harsh with them. Especially, we should remember that God says *Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord* (Rom_12:19).

4. (Luk_9:57-58) True greatness is shown in sacrifice.

Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, *that* someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head."

a. **Lord, I will follow You wherever You go:** This man desired to follow Jesus but knew little of the cost. Even animals have their own home, but Jesus didn't, and so it cost something to follow this kind of Messiah.

5. (Luk_9:59-60) True greatness means that we give Jesus the top priority in our lives.

Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."

a. **Lord, let me first go and bury my father:** This man's problem wasn't that his father was dead and needed to be buried; he was waiting until his father died until he would follow Jesus. Jesus lets him know that following Jesus is something you do *now*.

b. **Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God:** The man was caught between a struggle between right and right. It was a good thing to hang around for his father, but it wasn't the *best* thing, and service of the second best at the expense of the first best can result in ruin.

6. (Luk_9:61-62) True greatness means that we follow Jesus wholeheartedly, without delay.

And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go *and* bid them farewell who are at my house." But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

a. **No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God:** In plowing a field in that day, a farmer kept the rows straight by focusing on an object in front of them, off in the distance (such as a tree). If the farmer started to plow, and kept looking behind, he would never make straight rows and do a good job plowing. In our Christian life, we keep our eyes on Jesus in front of us, and never take our eyes off Him.

b. More than anyone else, Jesus lived this; He *steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem* (Luk_9:51).

(Luk 9:2) and he sent⁶ them out to proclaim⁷ the kingdom of God⁸ and to heal the sick.⁹

(Luk 9:3) He¹⁰ said to them, "Take nothing for your¹¹ journey — no staff,¹² no bag,¹³ no bread, no money, and do not take an extra tunic.¹⁴

(Luk 9:4) Whatever¹⁵ house you enter, stay there¹⁶ until you leave the area.¹⁷

(Luk 9:5) Wherever¹⁸ they do not receive you,¹⁹ as you leave that town,²⁰ shake the dust off²¹ your feet as a testimony against them."

(Luk 9:6) Then²² they departed and went throughout²³ the villages, proclaiming the good news²⁴ and healing people everywhere.

(Luk 9:7) ***Herod's Confusion about Jesus***

Now Herod²⁵ the tetrarch²⁶ heard about everything that was happening, and he was thoroughly perplexed,²⁷ because some people were saying that John²⁸ had been raised from the dead,

(Luk 9:8) while others were saying that Elijah²⁹ had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had risen.³⁰

(Luk 9:9) Herod said, "I had John³¹ beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?" So Herod wanted to learn about Jesus.³²

(Luk 9:10) ***The Feeding of the Five Thousand***

When³³ the apostles returned,³⁴ they told Jesus³⁵ everything they had done. Then³⁶ he took them with him and they withdrew privately to a town³⁷ called Bethsaida.³⁸ (Luk 9:11) But when the crowds found out, they followed him. He³⁹ welcomed them, spoke to them about the kingdom of God,⁴⁰ and cured those who needed healing.⁴¹

(Luk 9:12) Now the day began to draw to a close,⁴² so⁴³ the twelve came and said to Jesus,⁴⁴ "Send the crowd away, so they can go into the surrounding villages and countryside and find lodging⁴⁵ and food, because we are in an isolated place."⁴⁶

(Luk 9:13) But he said to them, "You⁴⁷ give them something to eat." They⁴⁸ replied,⁴⁹ "We have no more than five loaves and two fish — unless⁵⁰ we go⁵¹ and buy food⁵² for all these people."

(Luk 9:14) (Now about five thousand men⁵³ were there.)⁵⁴ Then⁵⁵ he said to his disciples, "Have⁵⁶ them sit down in groups of about fifty each."

(Luk 9:15) So they did as Jesus directed,⁵⁷ and the people⁵⁸ all sat down.

(Luk 9:16) Then⁵⁹ he took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven he gave thanks⁶⁰ and broke them. He gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.

(Luk 9:17) They all ate and were satisfied, and what was left over⁶¹ was picked up — twelve baskets of broken pieces.

(Luk 9:18) ***Peter's Confession***

Once⁶² when Jesus⁶³ was praying⁶⁴ by himself, and his disciples were nearby, he asked them,⁶⁵ "Who do the crowds say that I am?"⁶⁶

(Luk 9:19) They⁶⁷ answered,⁶⁸ "John the Baptist; others say Elijah;⁶⁹ and still others that one of the prophets of long ago has risen."⁷⁰

(Luk 9:20) Then⁷¹ he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter⁷² answered,⁷³ "The Christ⁷⁴ of God."

(Luk 9:21) But he forcefully commanded⁷⁵ them not to tell this to anyone,⁷⁶

(Luk 9:22) saying, "The Son of Man must suffer⁷⁷ many things and be rejected by the elders,⁷⁸ chief priests, and experts in the law,⁷⁹

and be killed, and on the third day be raised."⁸⁰

(Luk 9:23) ***A Call to Discipleship***

Then⁸¹ he said to them all,⁸² "If anyone wants to become my follower,⁸³ he must deny⁸⁴ himself, take up his cross daily,⁸⁵ and follow me.

(Luk 9:24) For whoever wants to save his life will lose it,⁸⁶ but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

(Luk 9:25) For what does it benefit a person⁸⁷ if he gains the whole world but loses or forfeits himself?

(Luk 9:26) For whoever is ashamed⁸⁸ of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person⁸⁹ when he comes in his glory and in the glory⁹⁰ of the Father and of the holy angels.

(Luk 9:27) But I tell you most certainly,⁹¹ there are some standing here who will not⁹² experience⁹³ death before they see the kingdom of God."⁹⁴

(Luk 9:28) ***The Transfiguration***

Now⁹⁵ about eight days⁹⁶ after these sayings, Jesus⁹⁷ took with him Peter, John, and James, and went up the mountain to pray.

(Luk 9:29) As⁹⁸ he was praying,⁹⁹ the appearance of his face was transformed,¹⁰⁰ and his clothes became very bright, a brilliant white.¹⁰¹

(Luk 9:30) Then¹⁰² two men, Moses and Elijah,¹⁰³ began talking with him.¹⁰⁴

(Luk 9:31) They appeared in glorious splendor and spoke about his departure¹⁰⁵ that he was about to carry out¹⁰⁶ at Jerusalem.¹⁰⁷

(Luk 9:32) Now Peter and those with him were quite sleepy,¹⁰⁸ but as they became fully awake,¹⁰⁹ they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.

(Luk 9:33) Then¹¹⁰ as the men¹¹¹ were starting to leave,¹¹² Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three shelters,¹¹³ one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah" — not knowing what he was saying.

(Luk 9:34) As¹¹⁴ he was saying this, a cloud¹¹⁵ came¹¹⁶ and overshadowed¹¹⁷ them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

(Luk 9:35) Then¹¹⁸ a voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One.¹¹⁹ Listen to him!"¹²⁰

(Luk 9:36) After¹²¹ the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. So¹²² they kept silent and told no one¹²³ at that time¹²⁴ anything of what they had seen.

(Luk 9:37) ***Healing a Boy with an Unclean Spirit***

Now on¹²⁵ the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a large crowd met him.

(Luk 9:38) Then¹²⁶ a man from the crowd cried out,¹²⁷ "Teacher, I beg you to look at¹²⁸ my son — he is my only child!

(Luk 9:39) A¹²⁹ spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams;¹³⁰ it throws him into convulsions¹³¹ and causes him to foam at the mouth.

It hardly ever leaves him alone, torturing¹³² him severely.

(Luk 9:40) I¹³³ begged¹³⁴ your disciples to cast it out, but¹³⁵ they could not do so."¹³⁶

(Luk 9:41) Jesus answered,¹³⁷ "You¹³⁸ unbelieving¹³⁹ and perverse generation! How much longer¹⁴⁰ must I be with you and endure¹⁴¹ you?¹⁴² Bring your son here."

(Luk 9:42) As¹⁴³ the boy¹⁴⁴ was approaching, the demon threw him to the ground¹⁴⁵ and shook him with convulsions.¹⁴⁶ But Jesus rebuked¹⁴⁷ the unclean¹⁴⁸ spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

(Luk 9:43) Then¹⁴⁹ they were all astonished at the mighty power¹⁵⁰ of God.

Another Prediction of Jesus'suffering

But while the entire crowd¹⁵¹ was amazed at everything Jesus¹⁵² was doing, he said to his disciples, (Luk 9:44) "Take these words to heart,¹⁵³ for the Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men."¹⁵⁴

(Luk 9:45) But they did not understand this statement; its meaning¹⁵⁵ had been concealed¹⁵⁶ from them, so that they could not grasp it.

Yet¹⁵⁷ they were afraid to ask him about this statement.

(Luk 9:46) ***Concerning the Greatest***

Now an argument started among the disciples¹⁵⁸ as to which of them might be¹⁵⁹ the greatest.

(Luk 9:47) But when Jesus discerned their innermost thoughts,¹⁶⁰ he took a child, had him stand by¹⁶¹ his side,

(Luk 9:48) and said to them, "Whoever welcomes¹⁶² this child¹⁶³ in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me, for the one who is least among you all is the one who is great."¹⁶⁴

(Luk 9:49) ***On the Right Side***

John answered,¹⁶⁵ "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop¹⁶⁶ him because he is not a disciple¹⁶⁷ along with us."

(Luk 9:50) But Jesus said to him, "Do not stop him, for whoever is not against you is for you."

(Luk 9:51) ***Rejection in Samaria***

Now when¹⁶⁸ the days drew near¹⁶⁹ for him to be taken up,¹⁷⁰ Jesus¹⁷¹ set out resolutely¹⁷² to go to Jerusalem.¹⁷³

(Luk 9:52) He¹⁷⁴ sent messengers on ahead of him.¹⁷⁵ As they went along,¹⁷⁶ they entered a Samaritan village to make things ready in advance¹⁷⁷ for him, (Luk 9:53) but the villagers¹⁷⁸ refused to welcome¹⁷⁹ him, because he was determined to go to Jerusalem.¹⁸⁰

(Luk 9:54) Now when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us *to call fire to come down from heaven and consume* ¹⁸¹ *them*?"¹⁸²

(Luk 9:55) But Jesus¹⁸³ turned and rebuked them,¹⁸⁴

(Luk 9:56) and they went on to another village.

(Luk 9:57) ***Challenging Professed Followers***

As¹⁸⁵ they were walking¹⁸⁶ along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."¹⁸⁷

(Luk 9:58) Jesus said to him, "Foxes have dens and the birds in the sky¹⁸⁸ have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."¹⁸⁹

(Luk 9:59) Jesus¹⁹⁰ said to another, "Follow me." But he replied,¹⁹¹ "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

(Luk 9:60) But Jesus¹⁹² said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead,¹⁹³ but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God."¹⁹⁴

(Luk 9:61) Yet¹⁹⁵ another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to my family."¹⁹⁶

(Luk 9:62) Jesus¹⁹⁷ said to him, "No one who puts his¹⁹⁸ hand to the plow and looks back¹⁹⁹ is fit for the kingdom of God."²⁰⁰

(Luk 10:1) ***The Mission of the Seventy-Two***

After this¹ the Lord appointed seventy-two² others and sent them on ahead of him two by two into every town³ and place where he himself was about to go.

(Guzik)

Luk 10:1-42

Luke 10 - THE SENDING OF THE SEVENTY

A. Instructing the seventy disciples at their departure.

1. (Luk_10:1-3) Seventy disciples are appointed and sent out.

After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, "The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves."

a. **After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also:** Jesus knew that the time was short before His crucifixion, and that there were still many villages that had not yet heard His message. So, Jesus needs help getting the message out, and He turns to the larger group of His disciples.

i. **The harvest is great:** This is *still* true. If we believe that it is but a short time until Jesus comes back, we should make the principles of Jesus' commission to the seventy our own.

b. **The laborers are few:** This means not only that there needs to be more workers, but that we have to be about our work for the Lord. When there is a lot of work and few workers, you have to get busy.

c. **Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest:** Jesus commands them to **pray**; the work in front of them is great and cannot be accomplished without much prayer.

d. **Go your way:** Jesus commands them to **go**, because God will use them to answer their own prayers.

e. **I send you out as lambs among wolves:** Jesus commands them to go with a certain kind of heart, that trusts in God and doesn't seek to abuse and manipulate people. Going **as lambs among wolves** doesn't sound very attractive to us! Yet, it is exactly as Jesus was sent, and how the power of God worked through Him mightily.

2. (Luk_10:4-8) Specific guidelines for their ministry.

"Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you."

a. After Jesus got them praying, after He got them going; and after He put their hearts in the right place, He next gives them specific instructions for ministry. They were not

to be distracted either by material concerns (**Carry neither money bag, sack, nor sandals**) or by tedious ceremonies of etiquette (**greet no one along the road**).

b. **And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give:** They were to trust that God would provide for them through the generosity of others, and they were to thankfully receive what was offered to them.

i. **For the laborer is worthy of his wages:** Jesus told His disciples to not regard the support given to them as charity, but as justified payment for their work on behalf of God's kingdom.

3. (Luk_10:9) What Jesus wanted the seventy to do: to heal and to preach.

"And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'"

a. **And heal the sick:** The healing was important because it showed that though the Kingdom of God was coming with power (as everyone expected it would), and the power would be shown in acts of mercy and kindness (which was not expected).

b. **Say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you"** : this means that the healing was a part of their preaching; they would then describe what the kingdom of God was all about, from what Jesus had taught and shown them.

4. (Luk_10:10-16) What would happen to those who would reject the message of the seventy.

"But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city. Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented

long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”

a. **The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you:** When we truly preach Jesus’ message, and do what Jesus did, we can trust that if we are rejected, it is because they reject the message of Jesus instead of rejecting us.

i. Unfortunately, sometimes through our own obnoxious manner or lack of love, people reject Jesus because of us. This should never be the case.

b. **Sodom . . . Tyre and Sidon:** These were each notoriously sinful cities. Jesus says that the cities that reject His message are in more trouble before God, because they have seen a greater work of God than any of those sinful cities did, yet they still reject Him.

i. The more we hear God’s truth, and the more we see Him move, the more we are accountable for. Since the people of **Chorazin** and **Bethsaida** and **Capernaum** had received such convincing signs, they are held to greater account for what they have seen.

ii. The Bible never specifically mentions Jesus’ miracles in **Chorazin**. This is an indication that the gospels are sketches of Jesus’ life, not full biographies. The Apostle John admitted this, saying it would be impossible to recount everything Jesus did (Joh_21:25).

B. Joy at the return of the Seventy.

1. (Luk_10:17-20) The joy of the seventy and Jesus’ warning. Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. “Behold, I

give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

a. **Even the demons are subject to us in Your name:**

When we look carefully at the commission Jesus gave these seventy (Luk_10:9), we see that Jesus had not originally commissioned them to cast out demons (as He did the twelve disciples in Luk_9:1-2). Therefore, this was an unexpected blessing of their ministry.

i. When we step out and do what Jesus tells us to do, we should expect that He would bless us with even more than He told us to expect.

b. **I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven:** What is Jesus talking about? The Bible actually mentions four falls of Satan.

i. From glorified to profane (Eze_28:14-16).

ii. From having access to heaven (Job_1:12, 1Ki_22:21, Zec_3:1) to restriction to the earth (Rev_12:9).

iii. From the earth to bondage in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Rev_20:1-3).

iv. From the pit to the lake of fire (Rev_20:10).

c. Here, Jesus speaks of Satan’s “first” fall, from glorified to profane. What Jesus just saw in the disciples was evidence that Satan had already lost his position of power. He is a conquered enemy, and when we act in the name of Jesus, victory is assured.

d. In remembering the fall of Satan, Jesus also warns them against pride. After all, if Satan could **fall like lightning** from his place of high spiritual status and privilege, so could they.

e. **Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you:** Jesus then warns them to rejoice in what God has done for them (**because your names are**

written in heaven), not in what they had done for God (**that the spirits are subject to you**).

i. Some people get “drunk” on the idea of spiritual power. After God uses them in some way, they have an arrogance that is very impressed with all *they do* for God. God wants us to always see that what He has done for us always is far greater than what we could ever do for Him.

2. (Luk_10:21-22) The joy of Jesus as He sees the work of God in His people.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*. ”

a. **In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit:** Jesus is genuinely excited here. Literally, the ancient Greek says He was *thrilled with joy*. God *delights* in using the weak and foolish things of this world to confound the wise (1Co_1:27-29).

i. Geldenhuys says that the ancient Greek word for **rejoiced** is “referring to exceptional rejoicing and exultation.”

b. **I thank You, Father:** Jesus’ joy makes Him break out into prayer. He praises God the Father for His wisdom, for His plan, and for His own unique relationship with God the Father.

c. In this prayer, Jesus highlights:

o His unity with the Father (**All things have been delivered to Me by My Father**).

o His special relationship with the Father (**no one knows who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son**).

o How God allows us to have some part in that special relationship (**and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him**).

3. (Luk_10:23-24) Jesus tells the disciples of the unique blessing they have.

Then He turned to *His* disciples and said privately, "Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen *it*, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard *it*."

a. **Many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it:** How the great men of the Old Testament would have longed to see Jesus' ministry and to minister for Him! How David would have loved to see Jesus do the things He did, and how Isaiah would have longed to hear what Jesus said! We have these privileges, but they did not.

C. Summary of the work of the Seventy: how we go forth with the gospel.

1. *The harvest is great:* We do the work knowing how big the job is.

2. *The laborers are few:* We do the work knowing that we have a key job.

3. *Pray the Lord of the harvest:* We do the work with a lot of prayer.

4. *Go your way:* We are to actually go and do the work.

5. *Like lambs among wolves:* We do the work making ourselves vulnerable, letting God be our strength.

6. *Carry neither:* We do the work without reliance upon anything except the gospel and power of God.

7. *Greet no one:* We do the work not allowing social obligations to hinder our work.

8. *Whatever house you enter:* We do the work expecting that God will bring help and provision.

9. *Eating and drinking such things as they give:* We do the work not being hung up on minor points.

10. *Heal the sick*: We do the work looking to minister to the whole person with the power of God.

11. *Say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you"* : We do the work preaching that the King and His kingdom are here.

12. *But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets*: As we do the work, we don't waste our time on those who are rejecting the gospel.

13. *He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me*: We do the work remembering whom we represent.

14. *The seventy returned with joy*: We do the work expecting God to do more than we expect.

15. *Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit*: We do the work knowing that Jesus has so much joy when we do His work.

D. The story of the Good Samaritan.

1. (Luk_10:25-29) A lawyer asks a question.

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

a. **A certain lawyer stood up and tested Him**: The **lawyer** (an expert in the Jewish Mosaic and rabbinical law) **tested** Jesus. The idea behind the ancient Greek word for **tested** isn't necessarily mean or evil. This may have been a sincere question from a sincere seeker.

b. **What shall I do to inherit eternal life? Eternal life**, in the Biblical understanding of the idea, doesn't refer to duration of life, because every person is immortal, either in heaven or hell). It doesn't refer to a life that begins when we die. **Eternal life** is a particular quality of life, a life that comes from God, a life we can have right now.

c. Jesus points the lawyer back to **What is written in the law**. If the question is **what shall I do to inherit eternal life**, the answer is simple: keep the **law** of God, and keep it perfectly.

d. **“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and “your neighbor as yourself”**
: The lawyer was wise enough to know this is the essence of the law. Now all the man has to do is to *live it*: **do this and you will live**.

i. It is clear enough what it means to *love God* with all we are, though it is exceeding difficult to do. But there has been much confusion about what it means to love **your neighbor as yourself**. This doesn't mean that we must love ourselves before we can love anyone else; it means that in the same way we take care of ourselves and are concerned about our own

interests, we should take care and have concern for the interests of others.

e. **But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”** The lawyer measured himself against both commands. He figured that he obeyed the first command well enough, but his keeping of the second commandment depended on how you defined **neighbor**.

i. His first and perhaps greatest mistake was in assuming that he had fulfilled the first commandment. When we really consider what the words mean, who among us has loved God

with **all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind**? It is easy for us to be distracted in any one of these areas even when we worship God, much less in our daily living.

ii. His second mistake was in thinking that he could fulfil the commandment to love God with all he had and still possibly not fulfil the command to love his neighbor. *If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he*

who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. (1Jn_4:20-21) iii. His third mistake was in the way that he wanted to narrowly define **neighbor**. If only our friends and those who are easy to love are our neighbors, then perhaps this man fulfills it. It all depends on how broad the definition is. The Jews in Jesus' day did believe that you had to love your **neighbor**; but they also taught that it was a duty before God to *hate your enemy*.

It all depends on who your **neighbor** is and who your enemy is.

2. (Luk_10:30-35) Jesus defines *neighbor* with an illustration. Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to *him* and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'"

a. **A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves:** The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was infamous for crime and muggings. It wasn't surprising to Jesus' listeners that He set the story on this particular road.

b. **Now by chance a certain priest came down that road:** The **priest** and the **Levite** (both categories of

religious officials) see their Jewish brother lying in his terrible state. But neither of them do anything. They both **passed by on the other side.**

i. Think of all the excuses that they could have used:

- o “This road is too dangerous for me to stop and help the man.”

- o “He might be a decoy for an ambush.”

- o “I’ve got to get to the temple and perform my service for the Lord.”

- o “I’ve got to get home and see my family.”

- o “Someone really should help that man.”

- o “If I’m going to serve at the temple I can’t get my clothes bloody.”

- o “I don’t know first aid.”

- o “It’s a hopeless case.”

- o “I’m only one person; the job is too big.”

- o “I can pray for him.”

- o “He brought it on himself, he should have never been alone on such a dangerous road.”

- o “He never asked for help”

ii. But all of these are simply excuses. “I never knew a man refuse to help the poor who failed to give at least one admirable excuse.” (Spurgeon)

c. **But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion:** When Jesus’ listeners heard about the priest and the Levite, the probably expected Jesus to say that a common Jewish man came and helped, that the story would be another way Jesus showed the corruption of the religious leaders were in his day. But Jesus shocks them by saying that the man who helped was a **Samaritan.**

d. What was special about a **Samaritan**? Generally speaking, Jews and Samaritans despised each other both racially and religiously. The culture gave the Samaritan plenty of reasons to hate this Jewish man and pass him by.

i. Some rabbis taught that a Jew was forbidden to help a Gentile woman who was in distress giving birth; because if they succeeded, all they did was to help one more Gentile come into the world. They often thought that Samaritans were *worse* than other Gentiles were.

e. **He had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him:** Instead of passing by, the Samaritan loved him with a sacrificial love. He didn't wait to be asked, for to see the need right in front of him was enough to compel him to action. He also gave freely of both his time and his resources.

i. The **wine**, containing alcohol, had an antiseptic effect on the man's wounds. The **oil** would help to soothe the wounds, easing the pain. To **set him on his own animal** means that the Samaritan himself walked.

ii. **He took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper:** It seems that **two denarii** would have provided for the man's needs in the inn for at least two or three weeks.

3. (Luk_10:36-37) Jesus applies the parable.

"So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

a. **Which of these three do you think was neighbor:** According to the thinking of the day, the priest and the Levite were **neighbor** to the man who had been mugged. But they didn't act like neighbors at all.

b. **He who showed mercy on him:** The lawyer can't even bring himself to say the name "Samaritan" was true neighbor to the hurting man. We might have expected to be an enemy, but he was instead a neighbor, the one **who showed mercy on him.**

i. Obviously, the lawyer knew that he could no longer justify himself. He did not have this kind of love, a love that would

go beyond what he wanted to think of as “neighbor.”

c. **Go and do likewise:** So, who is my neighbor? Who is the one I have to love? My neighbor is the one who others might consider my enemy. My neighbor is the one with a need right in front of me.

i. This doesn't mean running after every need that might present itself. After all, the Samaritan didn't establish a hospital for unfortunate travelers. But it does mean a concern for the ones plain before us, in both social and spiritual needs.

ii. “The world would be a changed place if every Christian attended to the sorrows that are plain before him.”
(Maclaren)

4. What if you don't have this kind of love, either for God or for man?

a. Then you must stop trying to inherit life by *doing*. Instead, believe on Jesus; trust God that Jesus paid the penalty you deserve for every time you have fallen short of loving God or loving others the way you should.

b. When you receive *eternal life* - God's kind of life in you - God will give you the resources to love Him and other people as you should. You can't do it apart from having His life in you.

i. “Let it never be forgotten that what the law demands of us the gospel really produces in us.”

(Spurgeon)

E. Mary and Martha.

1. (Luk_10:38-40) Martha's appeal to Jesus.

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?

Therefore tell her to help me.”

a. **A certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house:** Martha and Mary, along with their brother Lazarus, were two dear friends of Jesus who lived in Bethany. You can imagine how Martha wanted everything perfect when Jesus came to visit!

b. **Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word:** Martha didn't get the help she wanted from her sister Mary. It wasn't that Mary was lazy - she prepared as well as Martha, but she **also sat at Jesus' feet**.

c. **Martha was distracted with much serving:** Martha did nothing wrong in working hard for Jesus - that was good. Her problem was that she became **distracted with much serving**. Distracted from whom? Distracted from Jesus.

i. There are many people who become crabby and irritable in their service for the Lord like Martha. It is easy to look at all we do and to criticize those who aren't doing as much. But Martha's real problem wasn't Mary; it was Martha. She had become distracted and had taken her eyes off Jesus.

ii. Martha's frustration is typical of those who diligently serve with good intent, but forget to **also sit at Jesus' feet**.

2. (Luk_10:41-42) Jesus' reply to Martha.

And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

a. **Martha, Martha:** We can almost read the love in Jesus' voice as He says this! Martha did good - she wanted to serve Jesus! But she had not added the **one thing** [that] **is needed**.

i. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.*

(Psa_27:4)

ii. *When Jesus heard these things, he said to him, "You still lack one thing . . . come, follow Me."* (Luk_18:22)

iii. *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.* (Php_3:13-14) b. This story shows us three types of Christians.

i. There are people like Mary: Those who know how to serve and *also sit at Jesus' feet*.

ii. There are people like Martha: Those who diligently, and with the best intention serve God, but without adding the *one thing* - a continued focus on Jesus - and it results in great frustration.

iii. There are people who aren't doing either. They are not even in the house with Jesus, for they are too busy with their own pursuits.

(Luk 10:2) He⁴ said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest⁵ to send out⁶

workers into his harvest.

(Luk 10:3) Go! I⁷ am sending you out like lambs⁸ surrounded by wolves.⁹

(Luk 10:4) Do not carry¹⁰ a money bag,¹¹ a traveler's bag,¹² or sandals, and greet no one on the road.¹³

(Luk 10:5) Whenever¹⁴ you enter a house,¹⁵ first say, 'May peace¹⁶ be on this house!'

(Luk 10:6) And if a peace-loving person¹⁷ is there, your peace will remain on him, but if not, it will return to you.¹⁸

(Luk 10:7) Stay¹⁹ in that same house, eating and drinking what they give you,²⁰ for the worker deserves his pay.²¹ Do not move around from house to house.

(Luk 10:8) Whenever²² you enter a town²³ and the people²⁴ welcome you, eat what is set before you.

(Luk 10:9) Heal²⁵ the sick in that town²⁶ and say to them, 'The kingdom of God²⁷ has come upon²⁸ you!'

(Luk 10:10) But whenever²⁹ you enter a town³⁰ and the people³¹ do not welcome³² you, go into its streets³³ and say, (Luk 10:11) 'Even the dust of your town³⁴ that clings to our feet we wipe off³⁵ against you.³⁶ Nevertheless know this: The kingdom of God has come.'³⁷

(Luk 10:12) I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom³⁸ than for that town!³⁹

(Luk 10:13) "Woe to you, Chorazin!⁴⁰ Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if⁴¹ the miracles⁴² done in you had been done in Tyre⁴³ and Sidon,⁴⁴

they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

(Luk 10:14) But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you!

(Luk 10:15) And you, Capernaum,⁴⁵ will you be exalted to heaven?⁴⁶ No, you will be thrown down to Hades!⁴⁷

(Luk 10:16) "The one who listens⁴⁸ to you listens to me,⁴⁹ and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects⁵⁰

the one who sent me."⁵¹

(Luk 10:17) Then⁵² the seventy-two⁵³ returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons submit to⁵⁴ us in your name!"⁵⁵

(Luk 10:18) So⁵⁶ he said to them, "I saw⁵⁷ Satan fall⁵⁸ like lightning⁵⁹ from heaven.

(Luk 10:19) Look, I have given you authority to tread⁶⁰ on snakes and scorpions⁶¹ and on the full force of the enemy,⁶² and nothing will⁶³ hurt you.

(Luk 10:20) Nevertheless, do not rejoice that⁶⁴ the spirits submit to you, but rejoice⁶⁵ that your names stand written⁶⁶ in heaven."

(Luk 10:21) On that same occasion⁶⁷ Jesus⁶⁸ rejoiced⁶⁹ in the Holy Spirit and said, "I praise⁷⁰ you, Father, Lord⁷¹ of heaven and earth, because⁷² you have hidden these things from the wise⁷³ and intelligent, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your gracious will.⁷⁴

(Luk 10:22) All things have been given to me by my Father.⁷⁵ No one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son decides⁷⁶ to reveal him."

(Luk 10:23) Then⁷⁷ Jesus⁷⁸ turned⁷⁹ to his⁸⁰ disciples and said privately, "Blessed⁸¹ are the eyes that see what you see!

(Luk 10:24) For I tell you that many prophets and kings longed to see⁸² what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

(Luk 10:25) ***The Parable of the Good Samaritan***

Now⁸³ an expert in religious law⁸⁴ stood up to test Jesus,⁸⁵ saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"⁸⁶

(Luk 10:26) He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you understand it?"⁸⁷

(Luk 10:27) The expert⁸⁸ answered, " ***Love 89 the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,***⁹⁰ and ***love your neighbor as yourself.***"⁹¹

(Luk 10:28) Jesus⁹² said to him, "You have answered correctly;⁹³ do this, and you will live."

(Luk 10:29) But the expert,⁹⁴ wanting to justify⁹⁵ himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

(Luk 10:30) Jesus replied,⁹⁶ "A man was going down⁹⁷ from Jerusalem⁹⁸ to Jericho,⁹⁹ and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat¹⁰⁰ him up, and went off, leaving him half dead.¹⁰¹

(Luk 10:31) Now by chance¹⁰² a priest was going down that road, but¹⁰³ when he saw the injured man¹⁰⁴ he passed by¹⁰⁵ on the other side.¹⁰⁶

(Luk 10:32) So too a Levite, when he came up to¹⁰⁷ the place and saw him,¹⁰⁸ passed by on the other side.

(Luk 10:33) But¹⁰⁹ a Samaritan¹¹⁰ who was traveling¹¹¹ came to where the injured man¹¹² was, and when he saw

him, he felt compassion for him.¹¹³

(Luk 10:34) He¹¹⁴ went up to him¹¹⁵ and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil¹¹⁶ and wine on them. Then¹¹⁷ he put him on¹¹⁸ his own animal,¹¹⁹ brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

(Luk 10:35) The¹²⁰ next day he took out two silver coins¹²¹ and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever else you spend, I will repay you when I come back this way.'¹²²

(Luk 10:36) Which of these three do you think became a neighbor¹²³ to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"

(Luk 10:37) The expert in religious law¹²⁴ said, "The one who showed mercy¹²⁵ to him." So¹²⁶ Jesus said to him, "Go and do¹²⁷ the same."

(Luk 10:38) ***Jesus and Martha***

Now as they went on their way, Jesus¹²⁸ entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him as a guest.¹²⁹

(Luk 10:39) She¹³⁰ had a sister named Mary, who sat¹³¹ at the Lord's feet¹³² and listened to what he said.

(Luk 10:40) But Martha was distracted¹³³ with all the preparations she had to make,¹³⁴ so¹³⁵ she came up to him and said, "Lord, don't you care¹³⁶ that my sister has left me to do all the work¹³⁷ alone? Tell¹³⁸ her to help me."

(Luk 10:41) But the Lord¹³⁹ answered her,¹⁴⁰ "Martha, Martha,¹⁴¹ you are worried and troubled¹⁴² about many things, (Luk 10:42) but one thing¹⁴³ is needed. Mary has chosen the best¹⁴⁴ part; it will not be taken away from her."

(Luk 11:1) ***Instructions on Prayer***

Now¹ Jesus² was praying in a certain place. When³ he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John⁴ taught⁵ his disciples."

(Guzik)

Luk 11:1-54

Luke 11 - JESUS TEACHES AND WARNS

A. Teaching on prayer.

1. (Luk_11:1) A request from the disciples: **Lord, teach us to pray.**

Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

a. **As He was praying in a certain place:** Jesus prayed as was His custom, but a request came **when He ceased** - the disciples allowed Jesus to finish praying. They stood there and watched Him, drinking in the power of His prayer, until He was finished.

b. **Lord, teach us to pray:** There was something about watching Jesus pray that made them want to learn how to pray like Him. Is there anything magnetic in your prayer, or in your relationship with God? How you pray shows how you think about God. Jesus' prayer showed a lot about Him.

c. Just like the disciples, we need Jesus to teach us to pray. Prayer is so simple that the smallest child can pray, but it is so great that the mightiest man of God cannot be said to truly have mastered prayer.

i. "It is on prayer that the promises wait for their fulfillment, the kingdom for its coming, the glory of God for its full revelation . . . Jesus never taught His disciples how to preach, only how to pray. He did not speak much of what was needed to preach well, but much of praying well. To know how to speak to God is more than knowing how to speak to man. Not power

with men, but power with God is the first thing." (Murray)

d. On a previous occasion, when teaching the multitudes, Jesus taught this same basic prayer (Mat_6:9-13).

The fact that He repeats it here shows how important it is. The fact that He does not repeat it the exact same way as in Matthew shows that it was not to be used as a precise ritual or magic formula for prayer.

2. (Luk_11:2-4) Pray after this pattern.

So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as *it is* in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

a. **Our Father:** **Our** shows that prayer belongs among the people of God. Jesus assumed that His people would be praying *together*.

b. When we say **Father** we use a privileged title, demonstrating a privileged relationship. In the Old Testament, we don't see great men and women of God pray to the Lord this way. Jesus opened up to us new and greater paths of intimacy with God.

c. **Our Father in heaven:** The right kind of prayer comes to God as a **Father in heaven**; it rightly recognizes whom we pray to. To say that God is in heaven says:

i. He is a God of majesty and dominion: *O Lord God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?* (2Ch_20:6) ii. He is a God of power and might: *But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.*

(Psa_115:3)

iii. He sees everything: *The Lord's throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men.* (Psa_11:4)

d. **Hallowed be Your name:** **Hallowed** means "set apart." It is to say that there is no one like God, He is completely unique - not just a super person or a better person. **Name** means that God's whole character, His whole person, is set apart.

i. "The *name* in antiquity stood for far more than it does with us. It summed up a person's whole character, all that was known or revealed about him." (Morris)

e. **Your kingdom come:** We pray with a longing for God's **kingdom**; we want to see Jesus rule and reign on this earth, and we want it to begin with *us*.

i. The ancient Jews used to say: "He prays not at all, in whose prayers there is no mention of the kingdom of God."

f. **Your will be done:** We should pray with a desire to see God's *will* done, and put first. "In heaven God's will is obeyed by all, spontaneously, with the deepest joy and in a perfect manner without a shadow of unfaithfulness. And the believer must pray that such a condition should also prevail on earth."

(Geldenhuys)

i. This is prayer that puts God's interests first; it is *His name*, *His kingdom*, and *His will* that are primary. Our needs are addressed secondarily. Prayer isn't a tool to get what we want from God. It is a method to get God's will accomplished in us and all around us.

ii. Some see the Trinity in these requests. The *Father* is the source of all holiness; *Jesus* brings the kingdom of God to us; and the *Holy Spirit* accomplishes God's will in us and among us.

iii. Some see the three greatest things in these three requests. To pray **Our Father** requires *faith*, because he who comes to God must believe that He is. To pray **Your kingdom come** requires *hope*, because we trust it is to come in fullness. To pray **Your will be done** requires *love*, because love is the incentive to obey all of God's will.

g. God also wants us to pray for our daily, practical needs - like our **daily bread**.

i. When Jesus says **bread**, He means real bread, as in the sense of daily provisions. Early theologians allegorized this; they couldn't imagine a mundane thing like bread in such a majestic prayer like this.

ii. Calvin rightly said of interpretations that fail to see God's interest in the mundane: "This is exceedingly absurd." God *does* care about everyday things.

h. **Forgive us our sins:** We also need forgiveness from God. “As bread is the first need of the body, so forgiveness for the soul.” (Murray)

i. **For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us:** God forgives sins, we forgive debts. What we owe to God isn’t the same as what others owe to us.

i. **Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one:** We constantly plead to God for strength and protection against **temptation** and **the evil one**. True prayer is always offered knowing how weak we are in our selves, and how much we need the power of God.

i. **Temptation** is literally a *test*, not always a solicitation to do evil. God has promised to keep us from any testing that is greater than what we can handle. (1Co_10:13)

j. This prayer is notable for its simplicity and brevity; it is a marvel of powerful prayer put in simple terms.

i. The Rabbis had sayings like: “Whoever is long in prayer is heard” and “Whenever the righteous make their prayer long, their prayer is heard.” One famous Jewish prayer began: “Blessed, praised, and glorified, exalted, and honored, magnified and lauded be the name of the Holy One.”

ii. But when we try to impress God with our many words, we deny who God is: a loving, yet holy Father. Instead, we should follow the counsel of Ecc_5:2 : *God is in heaven, and you are on earth; therefore let your words be few.*

3. (Luk_11:5-8) Pray with boldness and persistence.

And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you’? I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.”

a. **Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight:** In the custom of that day, a whole family lived together in a one-room house. On one side of the house was a raised platform where they all slept; down on the ground were all their animals - a cow, perhaps some sheep and goats and so forth. There was no way the man could come to the door without disturbing the whole household.

i. Anyone who knows what it is like getting all the kids to bed and finally getting some rest knows what an imposition this would be!

b. **Yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs:** It took a lot of boldness for the man to so shamelessly ask his friend in the middle of the night - he really *wanted* the bread.

c. God often waits for our passionate persistence in prayer. It isn't that God is reluctant and needs to be persuaded. Our persistence doesn't change God; it changes us, developing in us a heart and passion for what God wants.

4. (Luk_11:9-13) Pray with a childlike confidence.

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

a. **Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you:** We are told to *keep on* asking, seeking and knocking. "All three verbs are continuous: Jesus is not speaking of single activities, but of those that persist." (Morris)

i. These descriptions speak of an earnestness and intensity; all too often, our prayers are merely wishes cast up to

heaven, and this is not real prayer.

b. **If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone?** Any human father loves to bless his children, and would never answer a simple request for something good with something evil. If that is case with us, **how much more** will God answer us, though sometimes it doesn't seem so!

c. God especially delights in giving **the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him**. We never need doubt God's desire to pour out His Spirit. The problem is in our receiving, not in God's desire to give.

5. Are we ready to enroll with Jesus in His school of prayer? Andrew Murray, author of *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, has a great prayer for new students:

a. Blessed Lord! Who ever lives to pray, You can teach me to pray, me to ever live to pray. In this You love to make me share Your glory in heaven, that I should pray without ceasing, and ever stand as a priest in the presence of my God.

Lord Jesus! I ask You this day to enroll my name among those who confess that they do not know how to pray as they ought, and specially ask You for a course in teaching in prayer. Lord! Teach me to wait with You in the school and give You time to train me. May a deep sense of my ignorance, the wonderful privilege and power of prayer, of the need of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of prayer, lead me to cast away my thoughts of what I think I know, and make me kneel before You in true teachableness and poverty of spirit. And fill me, Lord, with the confidence that with a teacher like You I shall learn to pray. In the assurance that I have as my teacher, Jesus, who is ever praying to the Father, and by His prayer rules the destinies of His Church and the world, I will not be afraid. As much as I need to know of the mysteries of the prayer-world, You will fold for me. And when I may not know, You will teach me to be strong in faith, giving glory to God.

Blessed Lord! You will not put to shame Your student who trusts You, nor, by Your grace, would he put You to shame either. Amen.

B. Jesus answers controversy about demons and signs.

1. (Luk_11:14-16) The controversy arises: some accuse Jesus of being in league with Satan; others request a sign from Him.

And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." Others, testing *Him*, sought from Him a sign from heaven.

a. **He was casting out a demon, and it was mute:** The Jews in Jesus' day had their own exorcists, who sought to cast demons out of people. But they believed that they had to have the demon reveal his name, or they could not cast the demon out.

b. **When the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled:** This is why **the multitudes marveled** when Jesus cast out a demon that caused muteness. According to the Jewish thinking of that day, the demon was impossible to cast out because he made the man unable to speak, and unable to reveal the name of the demon.

c. **But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons"** : When people see this great work, there are two reactions. Some attribute the working of Jesus to Satan (**Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons**), and some want to see more miracles before they will believe (**testing Him, sought a sign from heaven**).

i. **Beelzebub** is a difficult name to analyze. It may come from a similar sounding word that means, "Lord of the Flies."

2. (Luk_11:17-19) Jesus answers those who attribute His working to Satan.

But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and

a house *divided* against a house falls. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they will be your judges.”

a. **Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation:** Jesus shows that if He is an agent of Satan, and is working against Satan, then surely civil war has come Satan’s kingdom, and Satan’s kingdom will not stand. The point is that Satan won’t work *against* himself.

b. **And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out?** At the same time, Jesus observes that the Jewish leaders themselves have exorcists; are His accusers accusing them also?

3. (Luk_11:20-23) Jesus proclaims His strength over all demonic forces.

“But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.”

a. **But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you:** Essentially, Jesus is answering the charge that He is in league with the Devil. He says, “I’m not under Satan, instead, I’m proving that I am stronger than he is.”

b. **But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him:** In the picture Jesus presents, Satan is the **strong man**, who guards what belongs to him. Jesus’ ministry, both in the case of casting the demon out of the man who was mute, and in the broader sense, is defeating this **strong man**.

c. Jesus is the one who is **stronger than he** (Satan, the **strong man** of Luk_11:21). Jesus speaks about His work in

overcoming Satan on several different stages:

i. **He comes upon him:** Jesus engages Satan in battle, even on Satan's "turf."

ii. **And overcomes him:** Jesus flat out defeats this strong man, showing all that He is **stronger than he**.

iii. **He takes from him all his armor in which he trusted:** Jesus not only defeats Satan on our behalf, He also disarms him. As Col_2:15 says, *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it* [the cross].

iv. **And divides his spoils:** Satan will never get to keep or enjoy the "fruit" of his temporary victory. Jesus' victory over the **strong man** is complete.

d. If Jesus is **stronger than** Satan is, then we are confronted with the necessity of a decision: whose side will we be on? Will we be for Jesus or will we be against Him? Will we work for Jesus or will we work against Him?

i. "In the conflict against the powers of darkness there is no room for neutrality."

(Geldenhuys)

ii. In this sense, to be undecided is to be decided. There is no neutral ground; we are either with Jesus or against Him. There is no luxury of guarded neutrality.

iii. If Satan is the **strong man**, and Jesus is **stronger than** Satan is, there are two strong forces at work, trying to win our allegiance. We will embrace one or the other, intentionally or unintentionally.

4. (Luk_11:24-26) Jesus tells more about the dynamics of demonic possession.

"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds *it* swept and put in order. Then he goes and takes with *him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first."

a. **When an unclean spirit goes out of a man:** The picture of a person delivered from a demon, but not yet filled with Jesus is a picture of a person who tries to be neutral. They say they are not for Satan, but they are also not for Jesus. Jesus shows us that this is impossible.

b. **I will return to my house from which I came:** Apparently, demons have a desire to inhabit bodies, but why? For the same reason why the vandal wants a spray can, or a violent man wants a gun - a body is a weapon that they can use in attacking God.

c. **The last state of that man is worse than the first:** Jesus points out the danger of delivering a person from demonic possession without filling their life with Jesus. They can end up worse than before.

i. The heart of man has a vacuum-like nature to it. It has to be filled. If we “empty” our heart with evil, without filling it with Jesus and His good, evil will rush in again to fill it.

d. Therefore, in answering those who accused Him or working by the power of Satan, Jesus tells them that He hasn’t merely come to fight against evil, but to bring God’s good into our hearts.

5. (Luk_11:27-32) Jesus answers those who seek for a sign. And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed *is* the womb that bore You, and *the* breasts which nursed You!” But He said, “More than that, blessed *are* those who hear the word of God and keep it!” And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the

judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here.”

a. **More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it:** Hearts set on signs need to know the greatness of God’s word. What really makes a person **blessed** is hearing the word of the God and keeping that word.

i. About fifteen years after Jesus’ time on earth, a man named Theudas arose among the Jews and claimed to be the Messiah. He persuaded people to follow him with the promise that he would part the Jordan River in two. He tried; needless to say, he failed, and the Romans dealt severely with him. But he knew what kind of sign the people wanted to see. Jesus says hearing and keeping the word is more important than signs.

b. **This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign:** In addition, the generation that seeks for a sign (instead of God’s word) is evil, and ripe for judgment.

c. **No sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet:** How did Jesus become a sign like Jonah was a sign? Jonah gave his life to appease the wrath of God coming upon others. But death did not hold him; after three days and nights of imprisonment, he was alive and free (Jonah 1-2).

i. And Jesus is that sign, both to His present generation and to ours. Jesus *Himself* is the sign; we are to believe in Him, not a sign.

d. **The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them:** The **queen of the South** came to Solomon in 1 Kings 10. When she saw the great works that God did for and through Solomon, she praised the God of Israel. She didn’t say, “show me more and maybe I’ll believe.”

i. The **queen of the South came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon**. She sought after God's word with a tenacity that shames us. The people who asked Jesus for a sign saw His work right there in their own neighborhood, and didn't believe.

e. The point is clear: the **queen of the South** and the **men of Nineveh** were both Gentiles, but they had a more open heart to the things of God than the religious people of Jesus' day, who would not believe and receive the work of God right before their eyes.

C. Jesus' warnings to hypocrites.

1. (Luk_11:33-36) Jesus warns about inner darkness.

"No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts *it* in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light. The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light.

But when *your* eye is bad, your body also *is* full of darkness. Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. If then your whole body *is* full of light, having no part dark, *the whole body* will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light."

a. This section has application to both what went before it (Jesus answers those who thought His miracles were the work of Satan and those who wanted to see more) and what comes after it (Jesus deals with hypocrisy).

b. **No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand:** Just as a lamp should be displayed out in the open, so all can benefit from its light, so the word and work of God should be displayed. But when Jesus displays His word and works, the religious people of His day won't accept them!

c. **The lamp of the body is the eye:** Even as a bad eye will make a person blind, so their bad hearts will make them spiritually blind. You have to be spiritually blind to attribute

Jesus' miracles to Satan, to ignore the works of Jesus that are right before your eyes, or to live as a hypocrite.

i. When you are in darkness, there are two possible reasons why. There may be no light source, or the darkness may be within yourself. Jesus says they know that the darkness is within themselves.

d. **If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole body will be full of light:** When we have the light of God's word shining in us, when we see and understand the work of Jesus around us, we won't walk in the darkness of spiritual blindness.

2. (Luk_11:37-41) Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for their concern for only external matters.

And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat. When the Pharisee saw *it*, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner. Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness. Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also? But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you."

a. **He marveled that He had not first washed before dinner:** Jesus was not being unhygienic when **He had not first washed before dinner**. He did not follow the extremely technical and rigid requirements of ceremonial washing practiced by many pious Jews.

b. For these ceremonial washings, special stone vessels of water were kept, because ordinary water might be unclean. In performing the ceremonial washing, you had to take at least enough of this water to fill one and one-half eggshells. You started by pouring the water over your hands starting at the fingers and running down towards your wrist. Then you cleansed each palm by rubbing the fist of the other hand into it. Then you poured water over your hands again, this time from the wrist towards the fingers.

i. A *really* strict Jew would do this not only before the meal, but also between each course!

The rabbis were deadly serious about this. They said that bread eaten with unwashed hands was no better than excrement. A rabbi who once failed to do this was considered

excommunicated. Another rabbi was imprisoned by the Romans and used his ration of water for ceremonial cleansing instead of drinking, nearly died of thirst, and so was regarded as a great hero.

ii. If they were as concerned about cleansing their hearts as they were about their hands, they would be more godly men! But we always want to think there is something we can *do* to cleanse ourselves.

c. **Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness:** These Pharisees were careful to maintain the *appearance* of righteousness, but not the inner *reality* of it. They are **foolish ones** because they could be outwardly clean but inwardly dirty.

3. (Luk_11:42-44) Woes to the scribes and Pharisees.

“But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God.

These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over *them* are not aware *of them*.”

a. **For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God:** The Pharisees were so meticulous in their outward obedience that they would literally tithe from their herb gardens, counting out seeds and leaves, and giving a tenth to God.

i. Legalism of this sort assumes that people will only know we follow God if we do all these things associated with rules

and regulations. Instead, Jesus said that the real mark of a believer is the love they have for others in God's family.

ii. But the Jewish leaders saw it differently. "The Mishna lays it down that it is more important to observe the scribal interpretations than the Law itself (*Sanhedrin* 11:13)."

(Morris)

iii. It is as if a soldier did great in marching drills and put all their emphasis there, but wasn't any good in battle. This would not be a good soldier. Being good at all the outward things of Christianity doesn't mean you are a good Christian.

b. Jesus does not say that their tithing was wrong. Instead, He says, "**these you out to have done.**" What was wrong was what they were *not* doing - **leaving the others undone.**

c. The **best seats in the synagogues** were the seats up front facing the congregation. This is where the leaders and prominent people sat. These people thought it was no good to be walking right with God if others didn't *know* they were walking right with God.

d. **For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them:**

These religious leaders loved giving the impression that they were so spiritual, but they actually were defiling everyone they came in contact with. It was just as walking over a grave ceremonially defiled a Jewish person, even if they didn't know it was there.

i. According to Num_19:16, everyone who touched a grave was ceremonially unclean for

seven days. For this reason, the Jews sought to mark graves clearly, usually using whitewash, so everyone would know where they were and would avoid them.

4. (Luk_11:45-46) Jesus rebukes the lawyers for their oppressive religious system.

Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, "Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also." And He said, "Woe to you also, lawyers! For you load men with burdens

hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.”

a. **Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also:** The lawyer would have done better to keep quiet, but since he drew attention to himself, Jesus will address him also.

i. Remember what **lawyers** were in that culture. They were not so much those who would represent a client, but they represented the Mosaic Law. **Lawyers** were the experts on the Old Testament law and how it applied.

b. **For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers:** Because of the way that they interpreted the law, these experts in the Mosaic law laid heavy burdens on people.

i. For example, they taught that on the Sabbath, a man could not carry something in his right hand or in his left hand, across his chest or on his shoulder. But you could carry something with the back of your hand, with your foot, with your elbow, or in your ear, your hair, or in the hem of your shirt, or in your shoe or sandal.

ii. Or, on the Sabbath, you were forbidden to tie a knot - except, a woman could tie a knot in her girdle. So, if a bucket of water had to be raised from a well, you could tie a rope to the bucket, but a woman could tie her girdle to the bucket!

iii. Another example is how ancient Rabbis took the command to respect proper sanitation in the army camp of Israel (Deu_23:12-14) and applied it to Jerusalem, considering it the “camp of the Lord.” When this interpretation was combined with Sabbath travel restrictions, it resulted in a prohibition against going to the bathroom on the Sabbath.

c. Sadly, today many Bible “experts” do the same thing - use the Scriptures wrongly as a tool of control and oppression.

5. (Luk_11:47-51) These lawyers only admire dead prophets.

“Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. Therefore the wisdom of God also said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they will kill and persecute,’ that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.”

a. **For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them:** Jesus observes that the leaders of His day would honor dead prophets while persecuting living ones like Himself.

6. (Luk_11:52) Their most terrible crime - keeping others from God.

“Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”

a. **For you have taken away the key of knowledge:** Their legalistic approach has **taken away** understanding and knowledge. When you give people a list of rules by which they will save themselves, you aren’t helping them at all.

b. **You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered:** Those who lead God’s people in a legalistic way are guilty of a terrible crime before God - they keep others out of the kingdom.

7. (Luk_11:53-54) The reaction of Jesus’ enemies.

And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail *Him* vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.

a. The scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently: They could not receive Jesus'

correction. They preferred to stay in their own sinful thinking and habits rather than repent, and learn from Jesus' rebuke.

b. That they might accuse Him: This is a common reaction when someone corrects us. Instead of receiving the correction, we *counter-attack*.

i. Proverbs tells us what those who refuse correction do. First, they hate those who correct them (Pro_9:8, Pro_15:12). Second, they do not listen to the one correcting them (Pro_13:1).

Third, they despise their own soul (Pro_15:32).

ii. Proverbs also tells us the character of those who refuse correction. They are stupid (Pro_12:1) and they are foolish (Pro_15:5).

(Luk 11:2) So he said to them, "When you pray,⁶ say:

Father,⁷ may your name be honored;⁸

may your kingdom come.⁹

(Luk 11:3) Give us each day our daily bread,¹⁰

(Luk 11:4) and forgive us our sins,

for we also forgive everyone who sins¹¹ against us.

And do not lead us into temptation."¹²

(Luk 11:5) Then¹³ he said to them, "Suppose one of you¹⁴ has a friend, and you go to him¹⁵ at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread,¹⁶

(Luk 11:6) because a friend of mine has stopped here while on a journey,¹⁷ and I have nothing to set before¹⁸ him.'

(Luk 11:7) Then¹⁹ he will reply²⁰ from inside, 'Do not bother me. The door is already shut, and my children and I are in bed.²¹ I cannot get up and give you anything.'²²

(Luk 11:8) I tell you, even though the man inside²³ will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of the first man's²⁴ sheer persistence²⁵ he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

(Luk 11:9) "So²⁶ I tell you: Ask,²⁷ and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door²⁸ will be opened for you.

(Luk 11:10) For everyone who asks²⁹ receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door³⁰ will be opened.

(Luk 11:11) What father among you, if your³¹ son asks for³² a fish, will give him a snake³³ instead of a fish?

(Luk 11:12) Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?³⁴

(Luk 11:13) If you then, although you are³⁵ evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit³⁶ to those who ask him!"

(Luk 11:14) ***Jesus and Beelzebul***

Now³⁷ he was casting out a demon that was mute.³⁸ When³⁹ the demon had gone out, the man who had been mute began to speak,⁴⁰ and the crowds were amazed.

(Luk 11:15) But some of them said, "By the power of Beelzebul,⁴¹ the ruler⁴² of demons, he casts out demons."

(Luk 11:16) Others, to test⁴³ him,⁴⁴ began asking for⁴⁵ a sign⁴⁶ from heaven.

(Luk 11:17) But Jesus,⁴⁷ realizing their thoughts, said to them,⁴⁸ "Every kingdom divided against itself is destroyed,⁴⁹ and a divided household falls.⁵⁰

(Luk 11:18) So⁵¹ if⁵² Satan too is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? I ask you this because⁵³ you claim that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.

(Luk 11:19) Now if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons⁵⁴ cast them⁵⁵ out? Therefore they will be your judges.

(Luk 11:20) But if I cast out demons by the finger⁵⁶ of God, then the kingdom of God⁵⁷ has already overtaken⁵⁸ you.

(Luk 11:21) When a strong man,⁵⁹ fully armed, guards his own palace,⁶⁰ his possessions are safe.⁶¹

(Luk 11:22) But⁶² when a stronger man⁶³ attacks⁶⁴ and conquers him, he takes away the first man's⁶⁵ armor on which the man relied⁶⁶ and divides up⁶⁷ his plunder.⁶⁸

(Luk 11:23) Whoever is not with me is against me,⁶⁹ and whoever does not gather with me scatters.⁷⁰

(Luk 11:24) ***Response to Jesus' Work***

"When an unclean spirit⁷¹ goes out of a person,⁷² it passes through waterless places⁷³ looking for rest but⁷⁴ not finding any.

Then⁷⁵ it says, 'I will return to the home I left.'⁷⁶

(Luk 11:25) When it returns,⁷⁷ it finds the house⁷⁸ swept clean and put in order.⁷⁹

(Luk 11:26) Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there, so⁸⁰ the last state of that person⁸¹ is worse than the first."⁸²

(Luk 11:27) As⁸³ he said these things, a woman in the crowd spoke out⁸⁴ to him, "Blessed is the womb⁸⁵ that bore you and the breasts at which you nursed!"⁸⁶

(Luk 11:28) But he replied,⁸⁷ "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey⁸⁸ it!"

(Luk 11:29) ***The Sign of Jonah***

As⁸⁹ the crowds were increasing, Jesus⁹⁰ began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation; it looks for a sign,⁹¹ but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.⁹²

(Luk 11:30) For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh,⁹³ so the Son of Man will be a sign⁹⁴ to this generation.⁹⁵

(Luk 11:31) The queen of the South⁹⁶ will rise up at the judgment⁹⁷ with the people⁹⁸ of this generation and

condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon — and now,⁹⁹ something greater¹⁰⁰ than Solomon is here!

(Luk 11:32) The people¹⁰¹ of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented when Jonah preached to them¹⁰² — and now,¹⁰³ something greater than Jonah is here!

(Luk 11:33) ***Internal Light***

"No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a hidden place¹⁰⁴ or under a basket,¹⁰⁵ but on a lampstand, so that those who come in can see the light.

(Luk 11:34) Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy,¹⁰⁶ your whole body is full of light, but when it is diseased,¹⁰⁷

your body is full of darkness.

(Luk 11:35) Therefore see to it¹⁰⁸ that the light in you¹⁰⁹ is not darkness.

(Luk 11:36) If¹¹⁰ then¹¹¹ your whole body is full of light, with no part in the dark,¹¹² it will be as full of light as when the light of a lamp shines on you."¹¹³

(Luk 11:37) ***Rebuking the Pharisees and Experts in the Law***

As he spoke,¹¹⁴ a Pharisee¹¹⁵ invited Jesus¹¹⁶ to have a meal with him, so he went in and took his place at the table.¹¹⁷

(Luk 11:38) The¹¹⁸ Pharisee was astonished when he saw that Jesus¹¹⁹ did not first wash his hands¹²⁰ before the meal.

(Luk 11:39) But the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees clean¹²¹ the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.¹²²

(Luk 11:40) You fools!¹²³ Didn't the one who made the outside make the inside as well?¹²⁴

(Luk 11:41) But give from your heart to those in need,¹²⁵ and¹²⁶ then everything will be clean for you.¹²⁷

(Luk 11:42) "But woe to you Pharisees!¹²⁸ You give a tenth¹²⁹ of your mint,¹³⁰ rue,¹³¹ and every herb, yet you neglect justice¹³² and love for God! But you should have done these things without neglecting the others.¹³³

(Luk 11:43) Woe to you Pharisees! You love the best seats¹³⁴ in the synagogues¹³⁵ and elaborate greetings¹³⁶ in the marketplaces!

(Luk 11:44) Woe to you!¹³⁷ You are like unmarked graves, and people¹³⁸ walk over them without realizing it!"¹³⁹

(Luk 11:45) One of the experts in religious law¹⁴⁰ answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things you insult¹⁴¹ us too."

(Luk 11:46) But Jesus¹⁴² replied,¹⁴³ "Woe to you experts in religious law as well!¹⁴⁴ You load people¹⁴⁵ down with burdens difficult to bear, yet you yourselves refuse to touch¹⁴⁶ the burdens with even one of your fingers!

(Luk 11:47) Woe to you! You build¹⁴⁷ the tombs of the prophets whom your ancestors¹⁴⁸ killed.

(Luk 11:48) So you testify that you approve of¹⁴⁹ the deeds of your ancestors,¹⁵⁰ because they killed the prophets¹⁵¹ and you build their¹⁵² tombs!¹⁵³

(Luk 11:49) For this reason also the wisdom¹⁵⁴ of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,'

(Luk 11:50) so that this generation may be held accountable¹⁵⁵ for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning¹⁵⁶ of the world,¹⁵⁷

(Luk 11:51) from the blood of Abel¹⁵⁸ to the blood of Zechariah,¹⁵⁹ who was killed¹⁶⁰ between the altar and the sanctuary.¹⁶¹ Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against¹⁶² this generation.

(Luk 11:52) Woe to you experts in religious law! You have taken away¹⁶³ the key to knowledge! You did not go in yourselves, and you hindered¹⁶⁴ those who were going in."

(Luk 11:53) When he went out from there, the experts in the law¹⁶⁵ and the Pharisees began to oppose him bitterly,¹⁶⁶ and to ask him hostile questions¹⁶⁷ about many things, (Luk 11:54) plotting against¹⁶⁸ him, to catch¹⁶⁹ him in something he might say.

(Luk 12:1) ***Fear God, Not People***

Meanwhile,¹ when many thousands of the crowd had gathered so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus² began to speak first to his disciples, "Be on your guard against³ the yeast of the Pharisees,⁴ which is hypocrisy.⁵ (Guzik)

Luk 12:1-59

Luke 12 - ATTITUDES FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

A. The kind of attitude those who will face persecution should have.

1. (Luk_12:1-3) A warning to beware of hypocrisy.

In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first *of all*, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.

a. **Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy:** Hypocrisy is like *leaven* in the sense that it only takes a little bit of it to affect a great mass. A little bit of hypocrisy can be like a little bit of strychnine.

b. Some think that the only way to avoid being a hypocrite is to never aspire to a higher standard. But this is dangerous both for ourselves and for society. We should aspire to a high standard, yet be honest about our difficulty in fulfilling that standard.

c. **For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known:** The art of being a hypocrite depends on concealment, but one day all will be revealed. We can only be hypocrites before men, but never before God. He sees through the actor's mask we put on.

i. In 1985, a nationally known evangelist and preacher wrote a book condemning sin in America, especially sexual sin and pornography. Just a short time later, he tearfully confessed years of involvement in these very sins, and promised repentance - but was arrested for similar crimes again a few years down the road. His hypocrisy may have surprised many people, but not God. He knew all along.

2. (Luk_12:4-5) Do not fear persecution.

"And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!"

a. **Do not be afraid of those who kill the body:** Hypocrites will always despise true believers, so these words concerning persecution fit in well. In addition, when Jesus spoke to these disciples of His about martyrdom and persecution, He knew that all of them - except John - would die martyr's deaths for Him.

b. **After that have no more that they can do:** All your persecutors can do is kill you, and God has ultimate power over the life and death of the believer. Therefore, we shouldn't fear our persecutors, but have a healthy respect of God that makes us more concerned with obeying Him than any man.

c. There are literally millions of examples of people standing strong for Jesus through persecution.

Following is the particular story of an Englishman named Rowland Taylor.

i. In a book first printed in 1890, John Ryle describes the death of Rowland Taylor, who was executed in England because he believed that priests could marry and that the bread and wine of communion did not become the actual, literal, body and blood of Jesus.

ii. On the last day of January 1555, Taylor appeared with two others before the Bishop of Winchester, and was charged with heresy and dividing the church. When they refused to change their minds, they were condemned to death. When condemned, they replied back to the Bishop, "We know that God, the righteous Judge, will require our blood at your hands, and the proudest of all of you shall repent this receiving again of Antichrist, and of the tyranny you now show against the flock of Christ."

iii. On February 4, Taylor was kicked out of the priesthood, and that night, his wife and son were permitted to eat dinner with him. After dinner they left, with much affection and tears.

The next day, he was led out to Hadleigh to be executed, so that he would be burned to death in the city where he served as a pastor and in front of his congregation.

iv. When he left the London jail on the morning of February 5, it was still dark. Taylor's wife suspected he might be taken that morning, so she waited with her two daughters outside the jail. When she called out to him, the sheriff allowed her to come with her daughters for one last meeting with her husband. Rowland Taylor took his little daughter Mary up in his arms, while Elizabeth knelt with him and said the Lord's Prayer. They prayed together, then kissed and hugged, and Taylor said to his wife: "Farewell, my dear wife: be of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience. God shall raise up a father for my children." He kissed his daughter Mary and said, "God bless you, and make you His servant;" and, kissing Elizabeth, he said, "God bless you. I pray you all

stand strong and steadfast to Christ and His Word.” As he was led away, his wife called out, “God be with you, dear Rowland: I will, with God’s grace, meet you at Hadleigh.”

v. The journey from London to Hadleigh took several days, and all along on the trip, Rowland Taylor was joyful and merry, as if he were going to a banquet or a party. But on February 9, 1555, they came into Hadleigh. When they were still two miles from town, Taylor leapt off his horse and started on foot - but he was walking fast, almost as if he were dancing. The sheriff asked him how he felt, and he said, “Well, God be praised, good master sheriff, never better; for now I know I am almost at home . . . even at my Father’s house . . . O good Lord, I thank You! I shall yet once before I die, see my flock whom You, Lord, know I have most heartily loved and most truly taught. Good Lord, bless them, and keep them steadfast in Thy Word and truth.”

vi. When they came into Hadleigh, they put a hood over his head and came over a bridge. At the foot of the bridge was a poor man with five children, who cried out, “O dear father and good shepherd, Dr. Taylor, God help you, as you have many a time helped me and my poor children.” The streets were crowded on both sides with people who wanted to see him; when they saw him being led to death, they cried and wept with all their strength. People cried out, “Ah, good Lord, there goes our good shepherd from us, that so faithfully has taught us, so fatherly has cared for us, and so godly has governed us. O merciful God! What shall we poor scattered lambs do? What shall come of this most wicked world? God Lord, strengthen him and comfort him.” Taylor answered back, “I have preached to you God’s Word and truth, and am come this day to seal it with my blood.”

vii. When they came to the town square, he heard a great multitude and asked where they were. When they told him they were at the place he would be executed, he said “Thank God, I am even at home,” and he took the hood from his head. When the people saw his face, there was an

outpouring of emotion. They wept and cried out, "God save you, good Dr. Taylor!

Jesus Christ strengthen you; the Holy Spirit comfort you," and many other such things.

Taylor wanted to speak to the people one last time, but as soon as he opened his mouth, a guard put a spear right up to his open mouth, and made him stop.

viii. He started giving away his clothes - first his boots, then his coat and jacket, till all he had left was his pants and shirt. He then cried out with a loud voice, "Good people, I have taught you nothing but God's Holy Word, and those lessons that I have taken out of God's blessed Book, the Holy Bible; and I am come here today to seal it with my blood." But then one of the guards clubbed him over the head and said, "Is that keeping your promise of silence, you heretic?" So, seeing he could not speak, he knelt down to pray. A poor woman came to kneel beside him and pray, and the guards tried to push her away but she would not go.

ix. When he had prayed, he came to the stake he would be tied to and he kissed it, stepped into a barrel, and stood with his hands folded in prayer and his eyes towards heaven as they tied him to the stake. After some agonizing delays, they finally lit the fire, and Rowland Taylor prayed out loud: "Merciful Father of heaven, for Jesus Christ my Saviour's sake, receive my soul into Your hands." Then he stood perfectly still as the fires arose around him, without crying or moving, until a guard clubbed him on the head and his brains fell out, and his dead corpse fell into the fire. A marker was left that simply said, *1555: Dr. Taylor, in defending that which was good, at this place left his blood.*

3. (Luk_12:6-7) Realize your great value to God.

"Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."

a. **Not one of them is forgotten before God:** If God remembers the sparrows, He isn't going to forget you - so don't lose heart. As Rowland Taylor shared in some final words to his family: i. Before he left London to be executed, Rowland Taylor wrote his final thoughts in a book and presented them to his son: "I say to my wife and to my children, the Lord gave you unto me, and the Lord has taken me from you and you from me: blessed be the name of the Lord!"

I believe that they are blessed which die in the Lord. God cares for sparrows, and for the hairs of our heads. I have ever found Him more faithful and favourable than is any father or husband. Trust, therefore, in Him by means of our dear Savior Christ's merits. Believe, love, fear, and obey Him: pray to Him, for He has promised to help. Count me not dead, for I shall certainly live and never die. I go before, and you shall follow after to our long home."

b. **The very hairs of your head are all numbered:** They say that a red-head has about 90,000 hairs; a dark-haired person has about 120,000 hairs, and a blonde has about 145,000. But God knows *exactly* how many hairs you have - and if He knows that about you, He knows all the important things also!

c. **You are of more value than many sparrows:** Those who are persecuted are tempted to give in to the feeling that they are worthless and no one cares for them. But someone does care about you, a loving God in heaven.

4. (Luk_12:8-10) The importance of a good confession.

“Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.”

a. **Whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God:**

Thousands upon thousands of Christians through the ages have met the challenge of publicly confessing Christ, no matter what the cost.

i. In the early church, the “confessors” had special honor, they were those who had endured suffering for Jesus, yet had been spared death.

ii. You yourself may often be “put on trial” before the world. It is essential that we are able to confess Jesus at that time.

b. There are all sorts of ways that we can confess Jesus; it is important to be able to do it if ever put on trial, but it is also important to do it through our godly lives every day. Just by living for Jesus, we confess His name.

c. **A word against the Son of Man** probably refers to a moment of weakness (especially in public testimony), which can be forgiven. **Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit** is a settled rejection of God’s truth, which **will not be forgiven**.

i. This idea of the **blasphemy against the Holy Spirit** has troubled many; there are many who feel totally defeated and hopeless before God, convinced that they have committed this unpardonable sin.

ii. We must recognize the terrible danger of the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, and our need to avoid this sin at all cost -

yet, at the same time, guarding our hearts against the unwarranted accusation of this sin.

iii. What is **blasphemy against the Holy Spirit**? We understand this by first understanding what the ministry of the Holy Spirit is all about. Jesus said, *and when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment* (Joh_16:8); and that *He will testify of Me* (Joh_15:26). Therefore, when we persistently reject the work the Holy Spirit wants to do in us, when we have a continued, settled rejection of what He wants to tell us about Jesus, then we have blasphemed the Holy Spirit.

iv. The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven - not because it is a sin "too big" for God to forgive, but because it is an attitude of heart that cares nothing for God's forgiveness. It never has forgiveness because it never wants forgiveness God's way. It may want forgiveness on its own terms, but never God's way.

v. The way to *not* blaspheme the Holy Spirit is to receive Jesus Christ today, to stop rejecting His work of bringing you to Jesus.

5. (Luk_12:11-12) Don't worry about what to say - the Holy Spirit will help you.

Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.

a. **Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities**: Few of us have had the need to trust God because we have been hauled before **magistrates and authorities** for the sake of Jesus. Yet all have our own arenas where we need to trust God to give a bold witness.

b. **Do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say**: This is an exhortation to trust in God, not your eloquence. It is not an excuse for poor preparation in teaching or preaching.

c. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say: Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will help when you are “put on trial”; He will give you the right words to say.

B. Attitudes in regard to material possessions.

1. (Luk_12:13-15) The overall principle regarding material things.

Then one from the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” But He said to him, “Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?” And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

a. Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me: Jesus has just taught on the importance of standing for Him, and on our great value to God. Yet, in the midst of this teaching, a man interrupts Jesus to ask that He take his side in a financial dispute.

i. According to the law of the day, the elder brother would receive two-thirds of the inheritance and the younger brother would receive one-third. But this man isn’t asking Jesus to listen to both sides and make a righteous judgment; he is asking Jesus to take sides with him against his brother.

ii. Obviously, Jesus’ words about the need for full commitment and God’s care for us didn’t penetrate this man’s heart!

b. Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you? It isn’t that Jesus is unconcerned about justice; but that He is all too aware that this man’s covetousness will do him more harm than not having his share of the inheritance.

i. We may fight and fight for what is ours by right; and in the end, having it may do us worse than if we had let it go and let God take care of the situation.

ii. Here is where the deceptive nature of the heart is such a challenge. We often mask our covetousness by claiming we are on a righteous crusade.

c. **Beware of covetousness:** “Actually *beware* scarcely does justice to the force of *phylassesthe*, which is rather ‘guard yourselves’” (Morris) The idea is that we all are under attack from covetousness, and we must protect ourselves from it.

d. To be kept from greed, there is one overall principle we must be persuaded of: **one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses**. Apart from this, we live in **covetousness**, and *covetousness is idolatry* (Col_3:5).

2. (Luk_12:16-21) The parable of the rich fool.

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and* be merry.”’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

a. **But God said to him, “Fool!”** There is little doubt that everybody but God thought a great deal of this man; but in fact (and for eternity), this man is a *fool*. It isn’t only sin to give material things too high a place in your life - it is stupid also.

b. See the heart of the rich fool: **my crops . . . my barns . . . my goods . . . my soul**. Everything is about him, and nothing is God. In the end, it was proved that nothing was his - even his own soul was subject to God. He didn’t have any **crops**, any **barns**, any **goods**, and his **soul** was dead.

c. **Whose will those things be which you have provided?** They will not belong to God, because the man never surrendered those things to God. They will not belong

to the rich fool, because he can't take it with him. Perhaps they only belong to the Devil!

i. "Poorer than the poorest beggar he had to leave this world." (Geldenhuis)

d. **So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God:** The man's problem was not in that he had treasure on earth; but that he was not **rich toward God**.

i. How do we become **rich toward God**? First, by sacrificial giving to those in need (Luk_12:33; Luk_18:22; 1Ti_6:17-19). Also, by trusting in Jesus for every necessary thing (Rev_3:17-18).

ii. We can't obscure the fact that earthly riches often keep us from going after heavenly riches as we should. Paul wrote: *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

(1Ti_6:9) Most of us are afraid of poverty; we should be afraid of wealth.

iii. John Wesley's taught and lived wisely regarding riches. He said that you should earn as much as you can, save as much as you can, and give as much as you can. He himself lived on £28 British pounds a year and gave the rest away, even when his salary went from £30 to £60 to £90 to £120 over his lifetime.

3. (Luk_12:22-28) A warning against worry.

Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. Life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?

And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? If you then are not able to do *the* least, why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they

neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more *will He clothe you*, O *you* of little faith?

a. **Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life:** Greed and worry are closely connected.

Greed can never *get* enough, worry is afraid it will never *have* enough - neither have their eyes on Jesus.

b. **Do not worry** is a loving command. We often fail to appreciate what damage worry does in our lives.

i. Research clearly shows that stress deteriorates our immune systems; people under constant or high stress show lower T cell counts, essential for immune response. Stress has a definite affect on fertility. Prolonged stress has been shown to affect the brain, making a person less able to respond to future stress. And stress also is related to sudden heart failure.

ii. 20% of Americans say they feel stressed out every day, and 60% say they feel stressed out once a week. Only 10% say they never feel stressed.

c. **God feeds them:** However, this isn't just "don't worry, be happy" or "hakuna matata." Worry doesn't stop because we close our eyes, but because we know a loving God is greater than all our needs.

d. **If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest?** Worry is completely counter-productive - the stress it brings in our life does nothing but destroy. But trusting in God makes sense; if He takes such good care of the birds, the flowers, and the grass, won't He take care of His children?

i. **Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?** Jesus may be saying, "worry can't make you live longer" or He may be saying, "worry can't make you any taller."

Both are true; and if it is futile to worry about small things that are out of our control, it is even more futile to worry about big things even further out of our control.

ii. We can't **add one cubit** to our height by worrying, but a Japanese teen-ager who wanted to be a summo wrestler had 6 inches of silicone implanted under his scalp so he could meet the 5' 8" height requirement for summo wrestlers.

e. **How much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith:** Instead of worrying, Jesus wants us to have a child-like faith in Him. Children don't worry about paying the bills, or such things. They live lives of simple trust in their parents. You can't accomplish little things by worry; what makes you think you might accomplish great things by worry?

i. God cares for the flowers, but that means that every day for the flowers is not sun and sweetness. If every day was sunny, and there was never clouds and rain, the flowers would die quickly.

4. (Luk_12:29-34) God's intention is that your attention be on His kingdom and His treasure, not the kingdom and treasure of this world.

"And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

a. **Do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind:** Jesus' good news is simple. You don't have to hold on to the things of

this world with a death grip. Jesus let go of everything heaven itself held and was happy with a simple trust in God.

b. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you: God wants us to be more focused on Him than on these necessities of daily life; when we seek Him first, all the other things are added unto us.

i. We have sometimes thought that the only way to really seek the kingdom of God is to put away every other pursuit and go to some monastery or desert cave. But we can seek God in what we do every day; you can seek God at your job if you work unto the Lord and His glory.

c. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also: The correlation between where your heart is and where your treasure is isn't a suggestion; it is a simple fact. If you regard your material possessions as your treasure, then your heart is set here on this earth.

C. Attitudes in regard to Jesus' return.

1. (Luk_12:35-40) Be ready and waiting for your Master's return.

"Let your waist be girded and *your* lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed *are* those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down *to eat*, and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

a. And you yourselves be like men who wait for their master: If Christians are to not be greedy or worried, they

are to put their focus on the return of Jesus. This is something *worth* putting our lives into.

“These words of the Saviour are closely linked up with the previous warnings not to be worldly minded but heavenly minded.” (Geldenhuys)

b. Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning:

The idea behind this phrase is well expressed in the NIV: *Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning.*

i. The idea behind **waist be girded** is clear enough, but what did Jesus mean with the idea of **lamps burning**? You can be ready to work all day long, but if you don't have the proper equipment (such as illumination), your readiness doesn't matter at all.

ii. We are also reminded that *Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path* (Psa_119:105). You may have an inner willingness to serve God (your **waist** is **girded**) but not have the illumination you need to serve Him well (the light of God's word burning brightly).

c. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect: We all know the embarrassment of being called on when unprepared. Jesus tells us to be prepared for His coming - which is the most important thing you could ever be ready for!

i. A thief never announces his coming; he comes at a time when you would not expect him.

The way to be on guard against a thief is to live in constant readiness, and the way to be ready for Jesus' return is to live in constant readiness.

d. I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them:

The ready servants will be served by their Master and blessed; there is rich reward in living a life ready and expectant for Jesus to return.

2. (Luk_12:41-48) Be good stewards in your Master's absence.

Then Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable *only* to us, or to all *people*?” And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of food in due season? Blessed *is* that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few.

For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

a. **Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?** Jesus answers Peter, saying that this is addressed to every one, that all are to be like a **faithful and wise steward** (manager).

i. In this sense, we are all in the Jesus Management Training school. He is teaching us all how to be good, godly stewards for Him.

ii. All who are servants of Jesus must be ready for His return, but those who are ministers among His servants must all the more be ready. “Ignorance of the Divine shall not wholly excuse the sinner, he shall be beaten, but his stripes shall be few, his damnation shall be gentle compared with a minister’s, that knows his Master’s will but does it not; teaches it to others, but does it not himself . . . God looks upon wicked, loose, and scandalous and mischievous

ministers as the greatest transgressors, and he will deal with them as such.”

(Poole)

b. But if that servant says in his heart, “My master is delaying his coming” : A poor steward lives without the expectation of his master’s return. He mistreats other stewards and he wastes his time and resources on unprofitable things.

i. The servant who says, “he hasn’t come soon, so he isn’t coming at all” has makes a fatal mistake.

c. And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few: This shows that we are not only responsible for keeping from evil, but we must also do what we know God’s will is.

3. (Luk_12:49-53) Jesus brings purifying fire and division.

“I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! Do *you* suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

a. I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! The purifying power Jesus spoke of - the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives - could only come after He had accomplished His work on the cross (**I have a baptism to be baptized with**).

i. The fact that Jesus speaks of His suffering as **a baptism** is instructive. He wasn’t “sprinkled” with suffering; He was immersed in agony. In the same way, we are to baptized into

Christ and baptized with the Holy Spirit, immersed and overflowing.

b. **How distressed I am till it is accomplished!** Why was Jesus **distressed** until His work on the cross was **accomplished**? Not because He relished the agony of the cross, but because He knew all the good that would come of it, as a woman in the late stages of pregnancy looks forward to giving birth.

c. The fire of Jesus may be at work in your life right now; burning away the pride and impurities that keep you from being a faithful steward.

d. **Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother:** This may be the price one has to pay for being a faithful steward. When you follow Jesus faithfully, there may very well be division for His sake.

4. (Luk_12:54-56) The urgency to discern the times.

Then He also said to the multitudes, "Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is. And when you see the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is. Hypocrites!

You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how *is it* you do not discern this time?"

a. **You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?**

Jesus rebuked the people of His day because they did not **discern this time**. They should have understood more about the prophecies regarding the first coming of Jesus. Would Jesus rebuke Christians in this day for the same lack of insight? Are we aware of just how completely the stage is set for the end?

b. The stage is set for a rebuilt temple, necessary to fulfill the prophecies of the abomination of desolation (Mat_24:15, Mar_13:14, 2Th_2:3-4).

i. Israel is a nation again, and efforts to rebuild the temple are for real. The main Jewish group leading the charge to rebuild the temple is an organization called *Faithful of the Temple Mount*, who say they will continue their efforts to re-establish the Jewish temple on the Mount. One leader in the group said, "We shall continue our struggle until the Israeli flag is flying from the Dome of the Rock." In Israel, there are students being trained for the priesthood, learning how to conduct animal sacrifices in the rebuilt temple.

c. The stage is set for the sort of world-dominating confederation of nations, heir to the Roman Empire to arise (Dan_2:36-45, Rev_13:1-8, Rev_17:10-14).

i. The European Community is for real, and key governments that oppose more unity often don't do well. The Euro, the common European currency is a reality. If you go to Europe, it isn't strange to see more European Community flags than national flags in some places.

d. The stage is set for a political and economic "superman" to arise, the sort of single political leader who will lead this world-dominating confederation of nations (2Th_2:3-12, Rev_13:4-7).

i. The world wants - and needs - a superman badly, and is ready to fall in love with a human personality like never before. In much of Europe, there is a longing for another strong leader who will lead nations to glory again.

ii. Our own American personality cults are frightening enough. After all, why should it be news if someone get married for the eighth time? History shows that nations of hundreds of millions of people can be induced to worship a person - like Lenin, Stalin, or Mao. This shows us just how strong a personality cult can be when the government gets behind it wholeheartedly.

e. The stage is set for the kind of false religion the Bible says will characterize the very last days (2Th_2:4, 2Th_2:9-12, Rev_13:11-15, Rev_17:1-6).

i. Society is becoming more spiritual, yet less Christian every day; there is a deceptive fixation on signs and wonders as proof of the truth, as well as the church's willingness to imitate the world leaves churchgoers open to deception also.

ii. Efforts to make a one-world religion gain momentum all the time, under the idea of "open-mindedness." The Michigan Episcopal Diocese refused to vote upon the resolution "Jesus is the Christ, the only name given under heaven by which we may be saved." The resolution was rejected as being "flawed," "divisive," and "demeaning."

f. The stage is set for the kind of economic system predicted for the very last days (Rev_13:15-17). The technology is available, and the need is present.

5. (Luk_12:57-59) Knowing the times, get right with God now.

"Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right? When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite."

a. **Why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right?** If you know what time it is, you know that *now* is the time to get right with God, before you come before the Judge. If you wait until you stand before His throne, then it's too late.

b. So, **make every effort** to settle out of court! How do we settle out of court with God? By accepting God's offer to settle our account at Calvary, before the day of judgment.

i. Of course, this passage also has relevance to common sense regarding how Christians should regard the courts. If there is a dispute with someone, we are to do all that we possibly can to avoid going to court.

c. If we believe Jesus is coming soon, what should our response be? We must get our account settled with God

now, through Jesus' work on the cross. We must live ready and waiting for Jesus' return.

i. And, ask yourself a question: why is He waiting at all? Because His mercy says, "I want more to come to Me before I return in judgment." Aren't many of us glad that Jesus didn't come one, two, or five years ago?

(Luk 12:2) Nothing is hidden⁶ that will not be revealed,⁷ and nothing is secret that will not be made known.

(Luk 12:3) So then⁸ whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered⁹ in private rooms¹⁰ will be proclaimed from the housetops.¹¹

(Luk 12:4) "I¹² tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body,¹³ and after that have nothing more they can do.

(Luk 12:5) But I will warn¹⁴ you whom you should fear: Fear the one who, after the killing,¹⁵ has authority to throw you¹⁶ into hell.¹⁷

Yes, I tell you, fear him!

(Luk 12:6) Aren't five sparrows sold for two pennies?¹⁸ Yet not one of them is forgotten before God.

(Luk 12:7) In fact, even the hairs on your head are all numbered. Do not be afraid;¹⁹ you are more valuable than many sparrows.

(Luk 12:8) "I²⁰ tell you, whoever acknowledges²¹ me before men,²² the Son of Man will also acknowledge²³ before God's angels.

(Luk 12:9) But the one who denies me before men will be denied before God's angels.

(Luk 12:10) And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the person who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit²⁴ will not be forgiven.²⁵

(Luk 12:11) But when they bring you before the synagogues,²⁶ the²⁷ rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how you should make your defense²⁸ or what you should say, (Luk 12:12) for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that moment²⁹ what you must say."³⁰

(Luk 12:13) ***The Parable of the Rich Landowner***

Then³¹ someone from the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell³² my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

(Luk 12:14) But Jesus³³ said to him, "Man,³⁴ who made me a judge or arbitrator between you two?"³⁵

(Luk 12:15) Then³⁶ he said to them, "Watch out and guard yourself from³⁷ all types of greed,³⁸ because one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

(Luk 12:16) He then³⁹ told them a parable:⁴⁰ "The land of a certain rich man produced⁴¹ an abundant crop, (Luk 12:17) so⁴² he thought to himself,⁴³ 'What should I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?'⁴⁴

(Luk 12:18) Then⁴⁵ he said, 'I⁴⁶ will do this: I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

(Luk 12:19) And I will say to myself,⁴⁷ "You have plenty of goods stored up for many years; relax, eat, drink, celebrate!"

(Luk 12:20) But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life⁴⁸ will be demanded back from⁴⁹ you, but who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'⁵⁰

(Luk 12:21) So it is with the one who stores up riches for himself,⁵¹ but is not rich toward God."

(Luk 12:22) ***Exhortation Not to Worry***

Then⁵² Jesus⁵³ said to his⁵⁴ disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry⁵⁵ about your⁵⁶ life, what you will eat, or about your⁵⁷

body, what you will wear.

(Luk 12:23) For there is more to life than food, and more to the body than clothing.

(Luk 12:24) Consider the ravens:⁵⁸ They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn, yet God feeds⁵⁹ them. How much more valuable are you than the birds!

(Luk 12:25) And which of you by worrying⁶⁰ can add an hour to his life?⁶¹

(Luk 12:26) So if⁶² you cannot do such a very little thing as this, why do you worry about⁶³ the rest?

(Luk 12:27) Consider how the flowers⁶⁴ grow; they do not work⁶⁵ or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these!

(Luk 12:28) And if⁶⁶ this is how God clothes the wild grass,⁶⁷ which is here⁶⁸ today and tomorrow is tossed into the fire to heat the oven,⁶⁹ how much more⁷⁰ will he clothe you, you people of little faith!

(Luk 12:29) So⁷¹ do not be overly concerned about⁷² what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not worry about such things.⁷³

(Luk 12:30) For all the nations of the world pursue⁷⁴ these things, and your Father knows that you need them.

(Luk 12:31) Instead, pursue⁷⁵ his⁷⁶ kingdom,⁷⁷ and these things will be given to you as well.

(Luk 12:32) "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father is well pleased⁷⁸ to give you the kingdom.

(Luk 12:33) Sell your possessions⁷⁹ and give to the poor.⁸⁰ Provide yourselves purses that do not wear out — a treasure in heaven⁸¹ that never decreases,⁸² where no thief approaches and no moth⁸³ destroys.

(Luk 12:34) For where your treasure⁸⁴ is, there your heart will be also.

(Luk 12:35) ***Call to Faithful Stewardship***

"Get dressed for service⁸⁵ and keep your lamps burning;⁸⁶

(Luk 12:36) be like people⁸⁷ waiting for their master to come back from the wedding celebration,⁸⁸ so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him.

(Luk 12:37) Blessed are those slaves⁸⁹ whom their master finds alert⁹⁰ when he returns! I tell you the truth,⁹¹ he will

dress himself to serve,⁹² have them take their place at the table,⁹³ and will come⁹⁴ and wait on them!⁹⁵

(Luk 12:38) Even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night⁹⁶ and finds them alert,⁹⁷ blessed are those slaves!⁹⁸

(Luk 12:39) But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief⁹⁹ was coming, he would not have let¹⁰⁰ his house be broken into.

(Luk 12:40) You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."¹⁰¹

(Luk 12:41) Then¹⁰² Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for everyone?"¹⁰³

(Luk 12:42) The Lord replied,¹⁰⁴ "Who then is the faithful and wise manager,¹⁰⁵ whom the master puts in charge of his household servants,¹⁰⁶ to give them their allowance of food at the proper time?

(Luk 12:43) Blessed is that slave¹⁰⁷ whom his master finds at work¹⁰⁸ when he returns.

(Luk 12:44) I tell you the truth,¹⁰⁹ the master¹¹⁰ will put him in charge of all his possessions.

(Luk 12:45) But if¹¹¹ that¹¹² slave should say to himself,¹¹³ 'My master is delayed¹¹⁴ in returning,' and he begins to beat¹¹⁵ the other¹¹⁶

slaves, both men and women,¹¹⁷ and to eat, drink, and get drunk,

(Luk 12:46) then the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not foresee, and will cut him in two,¹¹⁸ and assign him a place with the unfaithful.¹¹⁹

(Luk 12:47) That¹²⁰ servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or do what his master asked¹²¹ will receive a severe beating.

(Luk 12:48) But the one who did not know his master's will¹²² and did things worthy of punishment¹²³ will receive a light beating.¹²⁴

From everyone who has been given much, much will be required,¹²⁵ and from the one who has been entrusted with much,¹²⁶ even more will be asked.¹²⁷

(Luk 12:49) ***Not Peace, but Division***

"I have come¹²⁸ to bring¹²⁹ fire on the earth — and how I wish it were already kindled!

(Luk 12:50) I have a baptism¹³⁰ to undergo,¹³¹ and how distressed I am until it is finished!

(Luk 12:51) Do you think I have come to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division!¹³²

(Luk 12:52) For from now on¹³³ there will be five in one household divided, three against two and two against three.

(Luk 12:53) They will be divided,¹³⁴ father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

(Luk 12:54) ***Reading the Signs***

Jesus¹³⁵ also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west,¹³⁶ you say at once, 'A rainstorm¹³⁷ is coming,' and it does.

(Luk 12:55) And when you see the south wind¹³⁸ blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat,' and there is.

(Luk 12:56) You hypocrites!¹³⁹ You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky, but how can you not know how¹⁴⁰ to interpret the present time?

(Luk 12:57) ***Clear the Debts***

"And¹⁴¹ why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?

(Luk 12:58) As you are going with your accuser before the magistrate,¹⁴² make an effort to settle with him on the way, so that he will not drag you before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer,¹⁴³ and the officer throw you into prison.

(Luk 12:59) I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid the very last cent!"¹⁴⁴

(Luk 13:1) ***A Call to Repent***

Now¹ there were some present on that occasion who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.²

(Guzik)

Luk 13:1-35

Luke 13 - REPENTANCE, FALSE RELIGION AND THE TRUE WAY

A. The importance of repentance.

1. (Luk_13:1-5) Jesus uses two recent disasters to drive home a point.

There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all *other* Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all *other* men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

a. **The Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices:** We don't have a record in secular history about the specific incident mentioned here. But there is a similar incident before the ministry of Jesus, Pilate wanted to build an aqueduct from the Pools of Solomon to the city of Jerusalem. To pay for it, he demanded money from the temple treasury, money that had been dedicated to God - and this outraged the people. When the Jews sent a delegation to beg for their money back, Pilate sent into the crowd soldiers dressed as common people, and at a certain signal they took out daggers and attacked the people asking for the money.

i. This doesn't seem to be the same incident mentioned here, but it shows how completely consistent it was with the character of Pilate to slaughter some Galilean Jews on their way to sacrifice to the Lord in Jerusalem.

b. **Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans:** Jesus cites two instances of disaster that were well known in His day. One was an evil done by the hand of man, and the other was seemingly a natural disaster (**eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them**).

i. We normally think of some people as "good," and some people as "bad," and believe that God should allow good things to happen to good people and bad things to bad people. Jesus dispels this notion.

ii. But Jesus' point is not that the Galileans in question were innocent; they were simply not *more* guilty than the others. All are guilty.

c. **Unless you repent you will all likewise perish:** In analyzing the issue, Jesus gets away from the question "why did this happen?" and turns it into "what does this mean to me?"

i. It means that we all may die at any time, so repentance must be a top priority. Those who died in both of these instances did not think they would die soon, but they did, and we can suppose that most of them were not ready.

d. By noting the ancient Greek grammar, we see that Jesus here mentions two kinds of repentance, and both are essential. Luk_13:5 (**unless you repent**) describes a "once and for all" repentance. The verb tense in Luk_13:3 (**unless you repent**) describes a continuing repentance.

i. Jesus' warning that they must repent or perish had an immediate, chilling fulfillment.

Within a generation, those citizens of Jerusalem who had not repented and turned to Jesus perished in the destruction of Jerusalem.

2. (Luk_13:6-9) Jesus illustrates some principles regarding God's judgment.

He also spoke this parable: "A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize *it*. And if it bears fruit, *well*. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'"

a. **He came seeking fruit:** After the warning *unless you repent you will all likewise perish*, Jesus used this parable to illustrate principles of God's judgment. The first point is simple: *God looks for fruit*.

i. The fruit of our lives shows what kind of person we really are. An apple tree will bring forth apples, not watermelons. If our lives have really been touched by Jesus Christ, it will show in the fruit we bear, even if it takes a while for the fruit to come forth.

ii. What fruit is God looking for? It certainly has to begin with the fruit of the Spirit, mentioned in Gal_5:22-23 : *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*.

b. **Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit . . . let it alone this year:** The farmer in the parable illustrates the *patience* of God in judgment. He waited **three years** and gave it a second chance.

i. The farmer, illustrating God, did not leave the tree alone. He gave it special care. Perhaps God is showing His special care for you right now - but it feels like there is manure all around you! Yet, don't resist God's work. Flow with it and bear fruit as He continues to work in your life.

c. **If not, after that you can cut it down:** The farmer, illustrating God, is also *just* in His judgment.

There finally will come a day of reckoning. It is not just an endless string of threats.

B. The danger of false religion.

1. (Luk_13:10-17) False religion is manifested in the synagogue.

Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise *herself* up. But when Jesus saw her, He called *her* to *Him* and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." And He laid *His* hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day." The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead *it* away to water it? So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound; think of it; for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?" And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

a. **A spirit of infirmity:** Apparently, this woman's physical condition (**bent over and could in no way raise herself up**) was due to a spiritual dynamic. We are foolish to think that spiritual issues cause all physical problems, but we just as foolish to think spiritual issues can *never* cause physical problems.

i. This woman is often used as an example of a "believer" who can be demon possessed. But as godly as she may have been, she was not *born again by the Spirit of God*, because the work of Jesus had not yet been accomplished on the cross. We believe that Christians cannot be demon possessed, not because they are good, church-going people, but because they are new creatures in Christ, and are off limits to demonic possession and control.

b. **Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity:** Of course, Jesus has no problem ministering to this woman's need. He shows complete mastery over demons, sickness, and disease.

c. **There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day:** The religious leaders objected, saying that Jesus broke the Sabbath. They were more concerned about observing religious traditions and forms than in seeing human need touched by God's Spirit.

i. **Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?** Jesus' reply is simple. If you can loose an animal on the Sabbath, why can't you free a suffering person on the Sabbath?

d. **So ought not this woman . . . be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?** Jesus uses a strong word in the ancient Greek language; really, He is more saying she *must* be loosed than she **ought** to be loosed.

2. (Luk_13:18-21) Two parables warn of false religion's corruption of the kingdom community.

Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches." And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

a. **What is the kingdom of God like?** The "standard" interpretation of these parables is that they describe the growth and spreading influence of the church. But it is more likely, in light of the language used and the course of church history, that these parables describe the corruption of the church by false religion.

b. **It grew and became a large tree:** With the parable of the mustard seed, Jesus describes an abnormal - even

monstrous growth. Mustard seed plants simply do not become large, tall trees.

i. Additionally, trees are sometimes used in the Bible to describe human governments, and evil governments at that. In fact, this tree reminds us of the one Nebuchadnezzar saw in his vision (Dan_4:10-16).

ii. **And the birds of the air nested in its branches:** Additionally, **birds** are consistently emissaries of evil in Jesus' parables (Mat_13:4; Mat_13:19). Apparently, this parable describes the kingdom community - the church - that has become so large and established that it is a roosting place for evil.

c. **It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened:** With the parable of the leaven in the **three measures of meal**, Jesus also describes corruption. **Leaven** is always representative of sin, and **three measures of meal** was the standard grain offering to God.

i. Essentially, Jesus gives a picture of *corrupt worship*. Hiding sin within corrupted an offering to God.

d. History abundantly proves the dangerous influence that false religion has had on the church. It has been shown in political intrigue, lust for power, intolerance, vain superstition, immorality, and greed.

C. The first and the last.

1. (Luk_13:22-24 a) Jesus responds to a question about salvation.

And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate"

a. **Lord, are there few who are saved?** We often wonder about the salvation of others. But in His reply (**Strive to enter through the narrow gate**), Jesus points back to the only person's salvation we can really know and asks, "are you yourself saved?"

i. The rabbis of that day used to love to debate the question of whether many or few would be saved. But Jesus won't be drawn into this debate. His only question is, "are *you* saved?"

b. **Strive to enter through the narrow gate:** The way is **narrow**. We can't bring our self-centeredness, pride, lusts, hate or especially our own righteousness. As the famous hymn sings: "Nothing in my hand I bring, only to Thy cross I cling."

c. **Strive to enter:** Therefore, we must **strive** (the word is literally "*agonize*") in order to lay these things aside and come in. The Greek word for *strive* has "the idea of a struggle or prize-fight." (Bruce) d. **Strive to enter through the narrow gate** isn't a call to save yourself by good works. Good works aren't the right **gate**. You can strive to enter all your life long, but if it isn't at the right **gate**, it makes no difference. Jesus Himself is the gate; He is the door.

e. Then why must we **strive to enter**? Because there are many obstacles in the way. The *world* is an obstacle. The *devil* is an obstacle. But probably the worst obstacle is your own *flesh*.

2. (Luk_13:24-27) The reason why it is important to strive in entering.

"For many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.'"

a. The punctuation supplied by translators in Luk_13:24-25 is poor. It should read *will not be able when once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door*. The point is

that there will come a time when it is too late to enter - that is why one must have an urgency to enter *now*.

i. This is true regarding our soul's salvation. You can know something about Jesus and not be saved. You can be in the presence of Jesus and not be saved.

ii. It is likewise true of so many areas where God challenges our lives. We must be urgent to do what God tells us *now*. For example, many men are terrible husbands, until the day when their wife just gives up - then they wake up, but it may be too late.

b. **You begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, "Lord, Lord, open for us"** : Many will seek to enter (in the sense of *wishing* to enter), but they will not be able to. When the door is open, it is open; when it is shut, it is shut.

i. There is a real difference between a mere *seeking* and *striving* to enter. A casual wish to be saved isn't enough, because there are too many obstacles on the way.

3. (Luk_13:28-30) The destiny of those who *don't* strive to enter.

"There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

a. **There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth**: They will be in hell (the place of **weeping and gnashing of teeth**), and they will see that others enter instead of them.

i. One woman protested to an evangelist that **weeping and gnashing of teeth** cannot apply to those who have lost their teeth. The preacher solemnly replied, "teeth will be provided!"

b. Yet, **indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last**. The makeup of those in

(or out) of the kingdom may be different than what some expected.

4. (Luk_13:31-33) Jesus proceeds despite a threat from Herod.

On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You." And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected.' Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the *day* following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem."

a. **Go, tell that fox:** Why did Jesus call Herod a **fox**? In this context, **fox** refers to a "cunning but weak ruler" (Geldenhuys). It was used as a contrast with a majestic animal like a lion.

i. We need to be aware that Satan can come at us as a fox as much as like a lion. We often just wait for a lion to come along, and a fox deceives us.

b. Herod is also an example of one of the *first* who will be *last*, mentioned in Luk_13:30. Now he sits in power and authority, but it won't last long.

c. **The third day I shall be perfected: Be perfected** actually has the idea of "reach the goal." Jesus knew that before long, He would reach the goal on the third day - resurrection would be His.

5. (Luk_13:34-35) Jesus laments over the city that will reject Him.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until *the time* comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

a. **How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her**

wings, but you were not willing! Jesus knew the destruction and terror that would come upon Jerusalem. He knew that their only chance of avoiding that horror was to receive Him as **He who comes in the name of the Lord.**

i. "When the hen sees a beast of prey coming, she makes a noise to assemble her chickens, that she may cover them with her wings from the danger. The Roman *eagle* is about to fall upon the Jewish state - nothing can prevent this but their conversion to God through Christ -

Jesus cries throughout the land, publishing the gospel of *reconciliation* - they would not *assemble*, and the *Roman eagle* came and destroyed them." (Clarke) b. This is what G. Campbell Morgan called "the Mother heart of God." God wants to save His people from the pain and suffering their sin will bring upon them.

i. What would God spare you from? What things would Jesus gather you under His wings and protect you from? When the little chick is out running on its own, it is especially vulnerable.

c. Jesus also reveals something of the conditions surrounding His second coming. When He comes again, the Jewish people will welcome Him as the Messiah, saying, "**blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.**"

i. It will take a great deal to bring Israel to that point, but God will do it, and Israel will welcome Jesus back - even as Paul wrote in Rom_11:26 : *And so all Israel will be saved.*

(Luk 13:2) He³ answered them, "Do you think these Galileans were worse sinners⁴ than all the other Galileans, because they suffered these things?

(Luk 13:3) No, I tell you! But unless you repent,⁵ you will all perish as well!⁶

(Luk 13:4) Or those eighteen who were killed⁷ when the tower in Siloam fell on them,⁸ do you think they were worse offenders than all the others who live in Jerusalem?⁹

(Luk 13:5) No, I tell you! But unless you repent¹⁰ you will all perish as well!"¹¹

(Luk 13:6) ***Warning to Israel to Bear Fruit***

Then¹² Jesus¹³ told this parable: "A man had a fig tree¹⁴ planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none.

(Luk 13:7) So¹⁵ he said to the worker who tended the vineyard, 'For¹⁶ three years¹⁷ now, I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and each time I inspect it¹⁸ I find none. Cut¹⁹ it down! Why²⁰ should it continue to deplete²¹ the soil?'

(Luk 13:8) But the worker²² answered him, 'Sir, leave it alone this year too, until I dig around it and put fertilizer²³ on it.

(Luk 13:9) Then if²⁴ it bears fruit next year,²⁵ very well,²⁶ but if²⁷ not, you can cut it down.' "

(Luk 13:10) ***Healing on the Sabbath***

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues²⁸ on the Sabbath,

(Luk 13:11) and a woman was there²⁹ who had been disabled by a spirit³⁰ for eighteen years. She³¹ was bent over and could not straighten herself up completely.³²

(Luk 13:12) When³³ Jesus saw her, he called her to him³⁴ and said, "Woman,³⁵ you are freed³⁶ from your infirmity."³⁷

(Luk 13:13) Then³⁸ he placed his hands on her, and immediately³⁹ she straightened up and praised God.

(Luk 13:14) But the president of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the crowd, "There are six days on which work⁴⁰ should be done!⁴¹ So come⁴² and be healed on those days, and not on the Sabbath day."

(Luk 13:15) Then the Lord answered him,⁴³ "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from its stall,⁴⁴ and lead it to water?⁴⁵

(Luk 13:16) Then⁴⁶ shouldn't⁴⁷ this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan⁴⁸ bound for eighteen long⁴⁹ years,

be released from this imprisonment⁵⁰ on the Sabbath day?"
(Luk 13:17) When⁵¹ he said this all his adversaries were
humiliated,⁵² but⁵³ the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the
wonderful things⁵⁴
he was doing.⁵⁵
(Luk 13:18) ***On the Kingdom of God***

Thus Jesus⁵⁶ asked,⁵⁷ "What is the kingdom of God⁵⁸ like?
⁵⁹ To⁶⁰ what should I compare it?
(Luk 13:19) It is like a mustard seed⁶¹ that a man took and
sowed⁶² in his garden. It⁶³ grew and became a tree,⁶⁴ and
the wild birds⁶⁵
nested in its branches."⁶⁶
(Luk 13:20) Again⁶⁷ he said, "To what should I compare the
kingdom of God?⁶⁸
(Luk 13:21) It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed
with⁶⁹ three measures⁷⁰ of flour until all the dough had
risen."⁷¹
(Luk 13:22) ***The Narrow Door***

Then⁷² Jesus⁷³ traveled throughout⁷⁴ towns⁷⁵ and
villages, teaching and making his way toward⁷⁶
Jerusalem.⁷⁷
(Luk 13:23) Someone⁷⁸ asked⁷⁹ him, "Lord, will only a
few⁸⁰ be saved?" So⁸¹ he said to them, (Luk 13:24) "Exert
every effort⁸² to enter through the narrow door, because
many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.
(Luk 13:25) Once⁸³ the head of the house⁸⁴ gets up⁸⁵ and
shuts the door, then you will stand outside and start to
knock on the door and beg him, 'Lord,⁸⁶ let us in!'⁸⁷ But he
will answer you,⁸⁸ 'I don't know where you come from.'⁸⁹
(Luk 13:26) Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in
your presence, and you taught in our streets.'⁹⁰
(Luk 13:27) But⁹¹ he will reply,⁹² 'I don't know where you
come from!⁹³ Go away from me, all you evildoers!'⁹⁴

(Luk 13:28) There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth⁹⁵ when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob,⁹⁶ and all the prophets in the kingdom of God⁹⁷ but you yourselves thrown out.⁹⁸

(Luk 13:29) Then⁹⁹ people¹⁰⁰ will come from east and west, and from north and south, and take their places at the banquet table¹⁰¹ in the kingdom of God.¹⁰²

(Luk 13:30) But¹⁰³ indeed,¹⁰⁴ some are last¹⁰⁵ who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

(Luk 13:31) ***Going to Jerusalem***

At that time,¹⁰⁶ some Pharisees¹⁰⁷ came up and said to Jesus,¹⁰⁸ "Get away from here,¹⁰⁹ because Herod¹¹⁰ wants to kill you."

(Luk 13:32) But¹¹¹ he said to them, "Go¹¹² and tell that fox,¹¹³ 'Look, I am casting out demons and performing healings today and tomorrow, and on the third day¹¹⁴ I will complete my work.¹¹⁵

(Luk 13:33) Nevertheless I must¹¹⁶ go on my way today and tomorrow and the next day, because it is impossible¹¹⁷ that a prophet should be killed¹¹⁸ outside Jerusalem.'¹¹⁹

(Luk 13:34) O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,¹²⁰ you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you!¹²¹ How often I have longed¹²²

to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but¹²³ you would have none of it!¹²⁴

(Luk 13:35) Look, your house is forsaken!¹²⁵ And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, ' ***Blessed is the one who comes in the***

name of the Lord! ' "¹²⁶

(Luk 14:1) ***Healing Again on the Sabbath***

Now¹ one Sabbath when Jesus went to dine² at the house of a leader³ of the Pharisees,⁴ they were watching⁵ him closely.

(Guzik)

Luk 14:1-15:1

Luke 14 - FEASTS AND INVITATIONS

A. Healing on the Sabbath.

1. (Luk_14:1) Jesus eats in a Pharisee's home.

Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely.

a. **He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath:** Even though Jesus had some of His greatest disputes with the Pharisees, He still associated with them - not to be one of them, but to show them a godly example.

b. **They watched Him closely:** Jesus was under constant observation. People wanted to know what He would do in different situations, and they would form their opinions about God and Jesus based on what they saw.

i. In 2Co_3:2-3, Paul explains that we are letters from Jesus, that all men read; that the letters are not written with ink, but with the Holy Spirit, and not on paper, but on our own hearts. *We* are the only Bible many will ever read.

2. (Luk_14:2-4) In front of His critics, Jesus heals the man.

And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" But they kept silent. And He took *him* and healed him, and let him go.

a. **Dropsy** is an "abnormal accumulation of serous fluid in the tissues of the body." (Liefeld) The word for **dropsy** here comes from the Greek words for "water" and "face," because the disease often made a person look bloated in their face.

b. **He took him and healed him, and let him go:** We notice that there seems to be no ceremony or hocus-pocus in the healing ministry of Jesus. He just *did it*, and the man was completely well.

c. **Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?** The issue would not revolve around the healing directly, but on healing **on**

the Sabbath. When Jesus healed the man, did He do *work* on the Sabbath, and violate God's command?

i. Of course, Jesus never broke the commandments of God. But He did often offend man's traditions that surrounded the commandments of God. We can do the same thing. For some reason, Christians have come to think that smoking breaks a commandment of God; that dancing breaks a commandment of God, and so forth. We are challenged enough by God's commandments without laying man's traditions on top of them!

3. (Luk_14:5-6) Jesus explains why He can heal on the Sabbath.

Then He answered them, saying, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

a. **Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?** Jesus' logic is simple and can't be disputed. If it is all right to help animals on the Sabbath, how much more is it right to heal *people* who are made in God's image?

b. The legalism of the Pharisees is really an expression of their *pride*. What can be more proud than setting man's traditions above the law of God?

B. Jesus teaches on pride and humility.

1. (Luk_14:7) The setting for this teaching.

So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: a. **So He told a parable:** What follows is a **parable**, a real-life illustration set along side a Biblical truth to give an example. Parables are not *fables*; Jesus didn't tell fanciful stories with morals. He took real-life situations familiar to all, and used them to illustrate God's truth.

b. **When He noted how they chose the best places:** At the home of the Pharisee, Jesus noticed how people

strategically placed themselves so as to be in **the best places**; that is, the places of most honor.

c. In Jesus' day, the seating arrangement at a dinner showed a genuine "pecking order." The most honored person sat in a particular seat, the next most honored person in another seat, and so on down the line.

2. (Luk_14:8-9) What not to do: don't take the highest place on your own initiative.

"When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place."

a. **Do not sit in the best place:** If one takes the most honored seat for himself, he may be asked to be removed if the host would rather have someone else sit there.

b. This is a perfect picture of a person trying to advance himself by self-promotion and politicking, instead of being humble letting God do the work.

i. Then how do you get promoted? Don't play the self-promotion games; do your work hard and unto the Lord, and let God raise you up. *For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south, but God is the Judge: He puts down one, and exalts another.* (Psa_75:6-7)

3. (Luk_14:10-11) What to do: take a lower place, and let God move you up.

"But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

a. **Go and sit down in the lowest place:** When we are at the lower place, we aren't there just to be noticed so we can go up higher. Nor are we miserable there, and letting

everyone know by our facial expressions that we really don't belong there.

i. Jesus isn't merely teaching good manners, but a lifestyle that *in lowliness of mind esteems others better than himself*. (Php_2:3)

b. **Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you:** Instead, we joyfully embrace the lower place; we aren't filled with such a high opinion of ourselves that we think we don't "belong" there. Then we are rewarded before the Lord. To truly humble yourself is to get your eyes off yourself, and to start living an others-centered life.

c. **For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted:** When we seek to take honor to ourselves, we will always be humbled - if not on earth, then for all of eternity. The promise of exaltation for the humble and humiliation for the proud is one ultimately fulfilled in eternity.

i. We don't the same cultural situation for wedding feasts today; but we certainly do have the desire to grasp for a certain position or status. And we even learn how to do our grasping with a spiritual veneer!

ii. We may choose the low place, and act meek and humble, so that others may notice how humble we are. This is a subtle form of spiritual pride that is very dangerous.

iii. When we get our own position, either through outward or subtle pride, we can even say "it was the Lord, it was the Lord" - but in our heart of hearts we know it was us, our own calculation, our own schemes, our own grasping. We should remember the words of George MacDonald: *In whatever man does without God, he must fail miserably - or succeed more miserably*.

d. Jesus had the right to teach on this subject, because He fulfilled it perfectly. He is the ultimate example of someone who deserved the highest seat, but took the lowest seat, and was "moved up" to the highest seat.

(Php_2:5-11)

4. (Luk_14:12-14) Jesus warns His host about the danger of pride when it comes to the guest list.

Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite *the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind*. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

a. **When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends:** We can show pride not only as the guest, but also as a host - and we do so through our "guest list."

i. *Do not ask* is actually "do not habitually ask." It isn't wrong to ever invite **your friends, your brothers**, and so on; but it is wrong to *only* invite such people.

b. **Lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid:** Do we associate only with people who can "advance" us or give something to us? Or are we willing to be "givers" in relationship also? It is easy for us to limit our "guest list" to a few comfortable, easy people, instead of reaching out to others.

i. Jesus is telling us to not associate with people on a "what's in it for me?" basis. That is self-centered living; we are called to follow Jesus, and He showed others-centered living.

c. **You shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just:** This kind of living will cost us something, and the full repayment comes only **at the resurrection of the just**; but it is worth it!

C. The guests of the Messiah's Banquet.

1. (Luk_14:15) An exclamation about the Messiah's Banquet. Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, "Blessed *is* he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

a. **Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!** From Old Testament times, the Messianic Banquet

was greatly expected. In the New Testament we know it as the marriage supper of the Lamb: *Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!* (Rev_19:9) b. Feasts were the most joyous, happy occasions of life. God shows us that we shouldn't have a dull, gray Christian life.

2. (Luk_14:16-24) Jesus' parable about the great feast.

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the* poor and *the* maimed and *the* lame and *the* blind.' And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"

a. **Come, for all things are now ready:** In a day without clocks, the date of the banquet was announced long before, but the exact time only was announced the very day.

b. **But they all with one accord began to make excuses:** Central to this parable are the excuses that are offered. The excuses are different, but really all the same - **they all with one accord began to make excuses.**

i. Excuses are *made*. They are fashioned for convenience, and are clung to in desperation.

c. **I have bought a piece of ground . . . I have bought five yoke of oxen:** The first two excuses have to do with

material things - and are each pretty lame. After all, what kind of fool first buys a piece of land, and *then* goes to check it? If you have already bought ten oxen, what is the use of testing them *after* you have already bought them?

i. When we buy something new, we are almost always preoccupied by it. Preoccupation with the things of the world is a common excuse for not following Jesus.

d. **I have married a wife**: The third excuse has to do with a man who puts his family before the Lord. The best thing we can show to our family is that they are not first in our lives, but that the Lord is.

i. These excuse makers condemn themselves; their excuses are only a thin veil hiding the fact that they do not *want* to come. "Back of an excuse is a lack of desire." (Morgan) There is no *rational* reason why someone would not want to be part of this feast; they just don't *want* to.

e. **Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind**: If those first invited to the feast refuse, there will still be a feast -

the master will not give a feast in vain!

f. Jesus responds to the man's exclamation *Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!* by saying "You admire the Messianic Banquet; are *you* ready to receive the invitation to come? Will you make excuses?"

i. Especially when you know what sort of people will be there: redeemed sinners and **the maimed and the lame and blind**.

g. **Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled**: Augustine and others have used the phrase **compel them to come in** as a justification to coerce people into Christianity, sometimes-using persecution and torture.

i. Why did Jesus say **compel**? These wanderers and outcasts would need to be *convinced* that they were really welcome - **compel**, yes - but in love.

ii. Bruce on **compel**: it “Reflects in the first place the urgent desire of the master to have an absolutely full house, in the second the feeling that pressure will be needed to overcome the incredulity of country people as to the invitation to them being meant seriously. They would be apt to laugh in the servant’s face.”

C. The cost of receiving the invitation.

1. (Luk_14:25-26) Disciples must put Jesus first.

Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.”

a. **He cannot be My disciple**: With this teaching, Jesus will help us define what a **disciple** is. The word **disciple** simply means “learner.” A disciple is someone who is a student, a learner of Jesus.

i. So, what does it take to become a learner of Jesus? Jesus has just shown us that coming to God is like accepting an invitation (Luk_14:16-24); is that all there is to it?

b. **If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple**: First, Jesus boldly says that nothing can come between you and God. Even good things such as family and the instinct of self-preservation cannot become idols to the true disciple.

i. Think of how audacious Jesus is! He asks for this kind of ultimate commitment, and we give it to Him - why? Because of love. When we know the love of Jesus; when we are in a love-relationship with Him, only then can we be committed to Him with this great devotion.

ii. Napoleon understood this principle when he said, “I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander [the Great], Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did

we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded his empire upon love; and this hour millions of men would die for him.”

c. **Hate** is a strong word, but that is exactly how it can seem to family members and friends when we put Jesus before them.

2. (Luk_14:27) Disciples must count themselves as dead; they must go all the way.

“And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

a. **Bear his cross and come after Me:** The one carrying a cross essentially walked down death row to their place of execution. They knew there was no turning back, and it was a total, complete commitment, with your life was completely yielded. You knew your life didn’t belong to you any more.

b. This is total commitment; Jesus gave Himself for us totally, and expects us to give ourselves to Him totally.

i. We can understate the demands of Jesus when we preach the gospel to others. We can give them the impression that coming to Jesus is only believing some facts instead of yielding a life.

c. “The general idea that these words of Jesus about *bearing the cross* refer to passive submission to all kinds of afflictions, like disappointments, pain, sickness and grief that come upon man in life, is totally wrong . . . only a person who for the sake of His service surrenders all self-seeking and abandons all striving after his own interests can be His disciple.” (Geldenhuys)

3. (Luk_14:28-33) Counting the cost before you come to Jesus.

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish *it*; lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see *it* begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit

down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”

a. **Sit down first and count the cost:** In the parable of the tower, Jesus says “sit down and see if you can afford to follow Me.”

b. **Sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand:** In the parable of the king, Jesus says “sit down and see if you can afford to refuse My demands.”

c. **Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple:** We have a difficult challenge in understanding and communicating the gospel here; there are two extremes to avoid.

i. We can *never* give people the impression that they have to clean up their lives before they come to Jesus; that is like washing up before you take a bath.

ii. But also, we can *never* give people the impression that Jesus won’t want to clean up their lives with their cooperation after they come to Him.

iii. It is as if we have an apartment and give the ownership of that apartment to Jesus. We don’t have to remodel the apartment before we give it to Jesus; but once we do, He comes in and starts tearing down walls and fixing up things. Being a disciple means that you help Jesus in that work instead of resisting it, or changing things back to the old way.

d. When the ancient Greek phrase **forsake all that he has** was applied to people meant, “to say goodbye to.” Jesus tells us to “say goodbye” to everything we have, entrusting it to Jesus.

4. (Luk_14:34-35) Don’t be a lukewarm follower of Jesus!

"Salt *is* good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, *but* men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

a. **If the salt has lost its flavor:** Salt that loses its "saltiness" can't be of use to Jesus. God looks for believers with "tang" that He can use.

b. Salt is only useful when it has the nature of salt. A Christian is only useful when he has the nature of Christ.

5. (Luk_15:1) How do people react to the radical demands of the gospel? These sinners respond, they do not reject.

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him.

a. This stern gospel was not inconsistent with Jesus' love; it was the result of His love. Sinners and outcasts saw the love prompting the bold call to discipleship, and they responded.

b. People respond to a challenging gospel, if the truth is spoken in love. We do a great disservice when we "soften" the demands of the gospel, either for others or for ourselves.

(Luk 14:2) There⁶ right⁷ in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy.⁸

(Luk 14:3) So⁹ Jesus asked¹⁰ the experts in religious law¹¹ and the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath¹² or not?"

(Luk 14:4) But they remained silent. So¹³ Jesus¹⁴ took hold of the man,¹⁵ healed him, and sent him away.¹⁶

(Luk 14:5) Then¹⁷ he said to them, "Which of you, if you have a son¹⁸ or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?"

(Luk 14:6) But¹⁹ they could not reply²⁰ to this.

(Luk 14:7) ***On Seeking Seats of Honor***

Then²¹ when Jesus²² noticed how the guests²³ chose the places of honor,²⁴ he told them a parable. He said to them, (Luk 14:8) "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast,²⁵ do not take²⁶ the place of honor, because a person

more distinguished than you may have been invited by your host.²⁷

(Luk 14:9) So²⁸ the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this man your place.' Then, ashamed,²⁹ you will begin to move to the least important³⁰ place.

(Luk 14:10) But when you are invited, go and take the least important place, so that when your host³¹ approaches he will say to you, 'Friend, move up here to a better place.'³² Then you will be honored in the presence of all who share the meal with you.

(Luk 14:11) For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but³³ the one who humbles³⁴ himself will be exalted."

(Luk 14:12) He³⁵ said also to the man³⁶ who had invited him, "When you host a dinner or a banquet,³⁷ don't invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors so you can be invited by them in return and get repaid.

(Luk 14:13) But when you host an elaborate meal,³⁸ invite the poor, the crippled,³⁹ the lame, and⁴⁰ the blind.⁴¹

(Luk 14:14) Then⁴² you will be blessed,⁴³ because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid⁴⁴ at the resurrection of the righteous."

(Luk 14:15) ***The Parable of the Great Banquet***

When⁴⁵ one of those at the meal with Jesus⁴⁶ heard this, he said to him, "Blessed is everyone⁴⁷ who will feast⁴⁸ in the kingdom of God!"⁴⁹

(Luk 14:16) But Jesus⁵⁰ said to him, "A man once gave a great banquet⁵¹ and invited⁵² many guests.⁵³

(Luk 14:17) At⁵⁴ the time for the banquet⁵⁵ he sent his slave⁵⁶ to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, because everything is now ready.'

(Luk 14:18) But one after another they all⁵⁷ began to make excuses.⁵⁸ The first said to him, 'I have bought a field,⁵⁹

and I must go out and see it. Please excuse me.'⁶⁰

(Luk 14:19) Another⁶¹ said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen,⁶² and I am going out⁶³ to examine them. Please excuse me.'

(Luk 14:20) Another⁶⁴ said, 'I just got married, and I cannot come.'⁶⁵

(Luk 14:21) So⁶⁶ the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the master of the household was furious⁶⁷ and said to his slave, 'Go out quickly⁶⁸ to the streets and alleys of the city,⁶⁹ and bring in the poor,⁷⁰ the crippled,⁷¹ the blind, and the lame.'

(Luk 14:22) Then⁷² the slave said, 'Sir, what you instructed has been done, and there is still room.'⁷³

(Luk 14:23) So⁷⁴ the master said to his⁷⁵ slave, 'Go out to the highways⁷⁶ and country roads⁷⁷ and urge⁷⁸ people⁷⁹ to come in, so that my house will be filled.⁸⁰

(Luk 14:24) For I tell you, not one of those individuals⁸¹ who were invited⁸² will taste my banquet!' "⁸³

(Luk 14:25) ***Counting the Cost***

Now large crowds⁸⁴ were accompanying Jesus,⁸⁵ and turning to them he said,

(Luk 14:26) "If anyone comes to me and does not hate⁸⁶ his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and even his own life,⁸⁷ he cannot be my disciple.

(Luk 14:27) Whoever does not carry his own cross⁸⁸ and follow⁸⁹ me cannot be my disciple.

(Luk 14:28) For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn't sit down⁹⁰ first and compute the cost⁹¹ to see if he has enough money to complete it?

(Luk 14:29) Otherwise,⁹² when he has laid⁹³ a foundation and is not able to finish the tower,⁹⁴ all who see it⁹⁵ will begin to make fun of⁹⁶ him.

(Luk 14:30) They will say,⁹⁷ 'This man⁹⁸ began to build and was not able to finish!'⁹⁹

(Luk 14:31) Or what king, going out to confront another king in battle, will not sit down¹⁰⁰ first and determine whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose¹⁰¹ the one coming against him with twenty thousand?

(Luk 14:32) If he cannot succeed,¹⁰² he will send a representative¹⁰³ while the other is still a long way off and ask for terms of peace.¹⁰⁴

(Luk 14:33) In the same way therefore not one of you can be my disciple if he does not renounce all his own possessions.¹⁰⁵

(Luk 14:34) "Salt¹⁰⁶ is good, but if salt loses its flavor,¹⁰⁷ how can its flavor be restored?

(Luk 14:35) It is of no value¹⁰⁸ for the soil or for the manure pile; it is to be thrown out.¹⁰⁹ The one who has ears to hear had better listen!"¹¹⁰

(Luk 15:1) ***The Parable of the Lost Sheep and Coin***

Now all the tax collectors¹ and sinners were coming² to hear him.

(Luk 15:2) But³ the Pharisees⁴ and the experts in the law⁵ were complaining,⁶ "This man welcomes⁷ sinners and eats with them."

(Guzik)

Luk 15:2-32

Luke 15 - THE JOY OF FINDING THE LOST

A. The lost sheep, the lost coin.

1. (Luk_15:2-3) Jesus responds to an accusation from the Pharisees.

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man receives sinners and eats with them." So He spoke this parable to them, saying: a. This, one of the most beloved chapters in the Bible, is made up of parables spoken in response to the accusation "**This man receives sinners and eats with them.**"

b. The Pharisees divided men into two classes: the unclean and the righteous, and they would have nothing to do with the “unclean.” Of course, many followers of Jesus do the same today.

i. The rabbis were so serious about not associating with the ungodly. They even refused to teach them the word of God.

2. (Luk_15:4-7) Finding a lost sheep.

“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’ I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”

a. **If he loses one of them:** It isn’t strange that a sheep would be lost. “No creature strays more easily than a sheep; none is more heedless; and none so incapable of finding its way back to the flock, when once gone astray: it will bleat for the flock, and still run on in an opposite direction to the place where the flock is: this I have often noticed.” (Clarke)

b. The shepherd’s concern is for the *lost* sheep; the one who is *not* lost is not in his immediate concern.

When he finds the sheep, the shepherd is *happy*, not angry.

i. Notice the word **rejoicing**: when Jesus carries us, He does it with rejoicing, not with a grudge, but gladly.

c. **He lays it on His shoulders, rejoicing:** When Jesus found us, He had to carry us also. *For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

(Rom_5:6) d. The rabbis believed that God would receive a sinner who came to Him the right way. But in the parable of the shepherd and the sheep, Jesus teaches that God actively *seeks out* the lost.

i. God does not grudgingly receive the lost. Instead, He searches after them. God finds the sinner more than the

sinner does find God.

ii. This was a completely alien thought to Jesus' audience of religious leaders. They believed they were more righteous than others were because they had diligently sought God and others had not.

e. **Likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance:** The application is plain: there is joy in **heaven** when the lost are found and they come to repentance. Even though there may be no joy among the Pharisees, there is joy in heaven!

3. (Luk_15:8-10) Finding a lost coin.

"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds *it*? And when she has found *it*, she calls *her* friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!' Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

a. **Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin:** If the shepherd was interested in one in a hundred, it makes sense that the woman would be interested in one in ten. She does not just account the coin as lost and care nothing about it.

b. Possibly, this coin refers to one that would be held with several others on a silver chain worn round the head as a mark of a married woman. It was a precious ornament to the woman, and would make the loss all the more severely felt.

c. **Light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully:** Just as the sheep would be hard to find, so a small coin would be hard to find on a dirt floor.

d. **Until she finds it:** Why does Jesus associate with sinners? Because God naturally wants to recover His things that are lost, just like us.

i. There is an instinct in us that prizes something all the more simply because it is lost. Your keys are never so

precious to you as when you can't find them!

e. **There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents:** God (and the angels) rejoice when one who was lost is found.

i. We don't often think of God as rejoicing, but this passage tells us that He does, and in what circumstances. *As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you* (Isa_62:5). *The Lord your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing* (Zep_3:17).

ii. The religious people of Jesus' day believed differently and even had a saying: "There will be joy in heaven over one sinner who is obliterated before God." In our zeal to speak out against the sin of our culture, do we give the same impression?

B. Finding the lost son.

1. (Luk_15:11-16) How the son came to be lost.

Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to *his* father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls *to me*.' So he divided to them *his* livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him *anything*."

a. **Give me the portion of goods:** In those days, a father could either grant the inheritance before or after his death, but it was usually done *after*. The younger son asks for a special exception.

i. The father clearly illustrates God's love. His love would allow rebellion and would respect man's will. The father

more than knew what would happen to the son, but allowed him to go his course none the less.

b. **Journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living:** The son left the area to become independent of the father - but he soon found himself in worse bondage than ever.

c. **He sent him into his fields to feed swine:** Pigs were, of course, considered unclean by Jews (Lev_11:7), and there could be no more disgusting profession than to feed pigs. And think of the smell!

d. **No one gave him anything:** If somebody were to support this prodigal in his prodigal life, he would delay the day that he came to himself and got right with God.

2. (Luk_15:17-19) The lost son's decision to return to his father.

"But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."'"

a. **But when he came to himself:** When the son came to himself, he didn't join a self-help group. He didn't seek to repair his inner child. He didn't blame his friends, his boss, or the pigs. He went back to his father (**I will arise and go to my father**).

b. **Go to my father:** Jesus doesn't say that the man returned to his village or to his home, but to his **father**. That is how we need to come back to God - to come back to *Him* first and foremost, before coming back to church or coming back to Christian friends.

i. Of course, when the son returned to the father, he also came back to the village and to the house; but his focus was on coming back to the **father**.

c. **Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son.**

Make me like one of your hired servants: The son displays his complete sense of unworthiness and confession of sin - essentials to receive the forgiveness the father would give us. We must come to God willing to be total slaves, but by His love, He makes us total sons.

3. (Luk_15:20-24) The father joyfully receives the lost son.

“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on *his* feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.”

a. **But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion:** The father had a love that waited, and never forgot the one who was loved, even when he was away. It was a love that fully received, not putting the son on probation.

i. How passionately did the father receive the son? **Kissed him** is emphatic; he kissed him repeatedly.

b. **Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it:** None of the four things brought to the son were necessities; they are all meant to honor the son and make him know he was loved. The father does much more than meet the son’s needs.

c. The younger son had two petitions. *Father, give me* (Luk_15:12) a request that showed rebellion; this request made him poor and destitute. *Father, make me like one of your hired servants* (Luk_15:19) a request that showed submission; this request made him rich and loved.

4. (Luk_15:25-32) The bitterness and resentment of the older son.

“Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.’ But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to *his* father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.’ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’”

a. **I never transgressed . . . you never gave:** These kind of exaggerations are common for those who harbor bitterness in their heart. Now, it finally comes out before the father, but the bitterness has done its corrosive damage in the heart already.

i. “The proud and the self-righteous always feel that they are not treated as well as they deserve.” (Morris)

b. **But he was angry and would not go in:** The older son was very obedient, yet very far from his father’s heart; he will not even see his younger brother. The older son is a perfect picture of the heart of the Pharisees, who were angry that God would receive the lost multitudes coming to Jesus.

i. But notice that the father also loved the older son, and he came out after him as well.

c. It is easy to see ourselves as the prodigal; how many of us can see ourselves as the elder brother? It is all a matter of focus. The younger son’s focus is on the father; the elder son’s focus is on himself and how much he has been wronged.

d. Some have criticized this parable because it seems to make repentance something apart from Jesus and the work on the cross. But we should see Jesus as being the way, the very road back to the Father. The prodigal can never come to God the Father unless he comes by way of the Son.

C. Observations

1. We can see Luke 15 as one parable in three scenes.

a. Each scene illustrates a different aspect of God's work. The Son seeks the lost as the Good Shepherd, the Holy Spirit seeks the lost with searching illumination, and the Father in seeks the lost with open arms upon return.

b. Each scene illustrates an increasing severity of loss. Of the sheep 1% were lost, of the coins 10% were lost, and of the sons 50% were lost.

c. Each scene illustrates a different way of being lost.

i. The sheep was lost by foolish wandering, and so are many people today.

ii. The coin was lost by what someone else did, and we can say that we are lost because of what Adam did.

iii. The son was lost because of rebellion, and a rebellious departure required a submissive return by the lost one.

2. We should never miss the main point: Jesus is answering the criticism "*This Man receives sinners and eats with them*" (Luk_15:2). Of course, He *should* seek after sinners, even as a shepherd seeks after sheep, a woman seeks after a coin that is lost, and as a father seeks after a lost son. It is only natural of the Son of God to seek the lost.

a. Is it natural with us to seek the lost? Do we have the heart of God? Who are the lost one we seeking to find in the Lord?

3. Summary: "The truth here taught is just this: that mercy stretches forth her hand to misery, that grace receives men as sinners, that it deals with demerit, unworthiness and worthlessness; that those who think themselves righteous are not the objects of divine compassion, but the unrighteous, the guilty and the undeserving, are the proper subjects for the infinite mercy of God; in a word, that

salvation is not of merit but of grace.” (Spurgeon) (Luk 15:3)
So⁸ Jesus⁹ told them¹⁰ this parable:¹¹

(Luk 15:4) "Which one¹² of you, if he has a hundred¹³ sheep and loses one of them, would not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture¹⁴ and go look for¹⁵ the one that is lost until he finds it?¹⁶

(Luk 15:5) Then¹⁷ when he has found it, he places it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

(Luk 15:6) Returning¹⁸ home, he calls together¹⁹ his²⁰ friends and neighbors, telling them, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost.'

(Luk 15:7) I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner²¹ who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people²² who have no need to repent.²³

(Luk 15:8) "Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins²⁴ and loses²⁵ one of them,²⁶ does not light a lamp, sweep²⁷ the house, and search thoroughly until she finds it?

(Luk 15:9) Then²⁸ when she has found it, she calls together her²⁹ friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice³⁰ with me, for I have found the coin³¹ that I had lost.'

(Luk 15:10) In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of God's angels³² over one sinner who repents."

(Luk 15:11) ***The Parable of the Compassionate Father***

Then³³ Jesus³⁴ said, "A man had two sons.

(Luk 15:12) The³⁵ younger of them said to his³⁶ father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate³⁷ that will belong³⁸ to me.'so³⁹ he divided his⁴⁰ assets between them.⁴¹

(Luk 15:13) After⁴² a few days,⁴³ the younger son gathered together all he had and left on a journey to a distant country, and there he squandered⁴⁴ his wealth⁴⁵ with a wild lifestyle.

(Luk 15:14) Then⁴⁶ after he had spent everything, a severe famine took place in that country, and he began to be in need.

(Luk 15:15) So he went and worked for⁴⁷ one of the citizens of that country, who⁴⁸ sent him to his fields to feed pigs.⁴⁹

(Luk 15:16) He⁵⁰ was longing to eat⁵¹ the carob pods⁵² the pigs were eating, but⁵³ no one gave him anything.

(Luk 15:17) But when he came to his senses⁵⁴ he said, 'How many of my father's hired workers have food⁵⁵ enough to spare, but here I am dying from hunger!

(Luk 15:18) I will get up and go to my father and say to him, "Father, I have sinned⁵⁶ against heaven⁵⁷ and against⁵⁸ you.

(Luk 15:19) I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me⁵⁹ like one of your hired workers." '

(Luk 15:20) So⁶⁰ he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way from home⁶¹ his father saw him, and his heart went out to him;⁶² he ran and hugged⁶³ his son⁶⁴ and kissed him.

(Luk 15:21) Then⁶⁵ his son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven⁶⁶ and against you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'⁶⁷

(Luk 15:22) But the father said to his slaves,⁶⁸ 'Hurry! Bring the best robe,⁶⁹ and put it on him! Put a ring on his finger⁷⁰ and sandals⁷¹ on his feet!

(Luk 15:23) Bring⁷² the fattened calf⁷³ and kill it! Let us eat⁷⁴ and celebrate, (Luk 15:24) because this son of mine was dead, and is alive again — he was lost and is found!'⁷⁵ So⁷⁶ they began to celebrate.

(Luk 15:25) "Now his older son was in the field. As⁷⁷ he came and approached the house, he heard music⁷⁸ and dancing.

(Luk 15:26) So⁷⁹ he called one of the slaves⁸⁰ and asked what was happening.

(Luk 15:27) The slave replied,⁸¹ 'Your brother has returned, and your father has killed the fattened calf⁸² because he got his son⁸³ back safe and sound.'

(Luk 15:28) But the older son⁸⁴ became angry⁸⁵ and refused⁸⁶ to go in. His father came out and appealed to him,

(Luk 15:29) but he answered⁸⁷ his father, 'Look! These many years I have worked like a slave⁸⁸ for you, and I never disobeyed your commands. Yet⁸⁹ you never gave me even a goat⁹⁰ so that I could celebrate with my friends!

(Luk 15:30) But when this son of yours⁹¹ came back, who has devoured⁹² your assets with prostitutes,⁹³ you killed the fattened calf⁹⁴ for him!'

(Luk 15:31) Then⁹⁵ the father⁹⁶ said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and everything that belongs to me is yours.

(Luk 15:32) It was appropriate⁹⁷ to celebrate and be glad, for your brother⁹⁸ was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.' "⁹⁹

(Luk 16:1) ***The Parable of the Clever Steward***

Jesus¹ also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who was informed of accusations² that his manager³ was wasting⁴ his assets.

(Guzik)

Luk 16:1-31

Luke 16 - MONEY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

A. The story of the dishonest steward.

1. (Luk_16:1-8) What the dishonest steward did.

He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' So he called every one of his master's debtors to *him*, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' So he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light."

a. **There was a certain rich man who had a steward:** A **steward** is a manager, especially a manager of money or property. The steward's boss (the **rich man**) hears that his

steward is cheating him (**wasting his goods**), and he calls him to account.

b. **What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me:** When the steward knows that he will be called into account, he knows that he can never pass the scrutiny of his master. He also knows that other options are unattractive to him (**I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg**).

c. **So he called every one of his master's debtors to him:** So, the steward makes friends with his master's debtors by settling their accounts for less than they actually owe. The steward, knowing he will be called to account, used his present position to prepare him for the next stage of his life.

i. **So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly:** While not approving his conduct, the master did in fact approve the steward's shrewdness.

d. For obvious reasons, this is Jesus' most notorious parable. How could Jesus use such an obviously dishonest man as an example for His disciples?

i. God uses evil things that we are familiar with to illustrate a particular point, without praising the thing itself. Other examples of this principle are when Paul used things like war and slavery as illustrations of the Christian life.

e. Yet, the dishonest steward is a praiseworthy example on several points. First, he knew he would be called to account for his life and he took that seriously. Christians should take seriously the idea that they will be called to account, and that idea can be a joy if we are about our Master's business! Second, he took advantage of his present position to arrange a comfortable future.

f. Jesus' assessment is still true: **the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light**. If we pursued the Kingdom of God with the same vigor

and zeal that the children of this world pursue profits and pleasure, we would live in an entirely different world.

i. It is to the shame of the Church that Coca-Cola is more widely distributed than the gospel of Jesus Christ. Simply, it is because **the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.**

ii. "Go to the men of the world, thou Christian, and do not let it be said that the devil's scholars are more studious and earnest than Christ's disciples." (Maclaren) 2. (Luk_16:9) Using money now with an eye to eternity.

"And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home."

a. **Make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon:** Jesus transfers the principle illustrated by the story of the unjust steward to us - we need to use our present resources to plan ahead for eternity.

b. **That when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home:** The world is filled with financial planners and advisers; and it is good for Christians to learn how to use their money wisely. But when most Christians talk about wise money management, they forget to practice the most important kind of long term investing: investing with an eye to eternity.

c. The important thing is to invest your resources for the Lord *now*; most of us wait until the day when we think we will have enough.

i. In a 1992 survey, people were asked how much money they would have to make to have "the American dream." Those who earn \$25,000 or less a year thought they would need around \$54,000. Those in the \$100,000 annual income bracket said that they could buy the dream for an average of \$192,000 a year. These figures indicate that we typically think we would have to have double our income in order to find the good life.

3. (Luk_16:10-12) Faithfulness in the little things shows how one will be faithful in the large things.

“He who *is* faithful in *what is* least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what is* least is unjust also in much.

Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own?”

a. **He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much:** In these words of Jesus, money is considered to be one of the **least** things. Yet, if a person cannot be faithful in managing the things that are **least**, how will they ever be faithful in handling the things that are great?

i. If you are false and unfaithful in everyday life, even if you put on the Christian image, you are also false and unfaithful in your spiritual life - and no one should entrust you with spiritual riches.

b. **Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon:** Why does Jesus call it **unrighteous mammon**? Because “Riches *promise* much, and *perform* nothing: they excite *hope* and *confidence*, and *deceive* both: in making a man *depend* on them for *happiness*, they *rob* him of the salvation of God and of eternal glory.” (Clarke) c. **Who will commit to your trust**

the true riches? In this sense, those who are leaders of God’s people must be good managers of their own money. If a person can’t be faithful before God with the money He has given them, how can they be faithful with the care of people?

i. This certainly does not mean that leaders in the church have to be wealthy or make a lot of money. It is an issue of how they *manage* the resources God has given to them, not how great their resources are.

ii. Unfortunately, when it comes to the question **who will commit to your trust the true riches**, far too many Christians are willing to entrust their spiritual care to a

person who can't even care for the things of **unrighteous mammon**.

d. **If you have not been faithful in what is another man's**: here, Jesus seems to be referring to the fact that all our riches belong to God, and we must see that we are managing *His* resources. Faithfulness in this will result in blessing that is our own.

4. (Luk_16:13) No one can be faithful to more than one master.

"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

a. **No servant can serve two masters**: Having **two masters** is not like working two jobs; here, Jesus has the master and slave relationship in view. A slave can't belong to two masters at the same time.

i. Jesus states that serving two masters is a simple impossibility. If you think that you are successfully serving two masters, you are deceived! One can *have* both money and God; but one cannot *serve* both money and God.

ii. Certainly, Jesus is talking about the *heart* here. Many people would *say* they love God, but their service of money shows that in fact they do not. How can we tell Who or what we are serving? One way is by remembering this principle: *you will sacrifice for your God*. If you will sacrifice for the sake of money, but will not sacrifice for the sake of Jesus, don't deceive yourself: money is your God.

iii. On a Friday afternoon in 1990, a businessman staggered to the steps of his Los Angeles office. Before he died of the gunshot wound to his chest, he called out the names of his three children. But he still had his \$10,000 Rolex watch clutched in his hand. He was the victim of a rash of Rolex robberies - and was killed as a sacrifice to his god.

iv. A 1992 story in the Los Angeles Times told about Michelle, a successful writer and editor, who fears the day her husband might discover her secret stash of credit cards,

her secret post office box or the other tricks she uses to hide how much money she spends shopping for herself. “I make as much money as my husband . . . If I want a \$500 suit from Ann Taylor, I deserve it and don’t want to be hassled about it. So the easiest thing to do is lie,” she explains.

Last year, when her husband forced her to destroy one of her credit cards, Michelle went out and got a new one without telling him. “I do live in fear. If he discovers this new VISA, he’ll kill me.”

v. A school teacher explained more: “Men just don’t understand that shopping is our drug of choice,” she joked, even while admitting that some months her salary goes exclusively to paying the minimum balance on her credit cards. “Walking through the door of South Coast Plaza is like walking through the gates of heaven. God made car trunks for women to hide shopping bags in.”

vi. A young professional named Mary explained: “Shopping is my recreation. It’s my way of pampering myself. When you walk into [a mall] and you see all the stores, it’s like something takes over and you get caught up in it.”

b. **You cannot serve God and mammon:** Some think that just because they are not rich, they can’t be a slave to money (**mammon**). But you don’t have to be rich to serve **mammon**; the poor can be just as greedy and covetous as the rich person is.

5. (Luk_16:14-15) Jesus responds to the Pharisees’ derision. Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.”

a. **And they derided Him:** The derision of the Pharisees was based on their own self-interest. They **were lovers of money**. Often we reject the message of Jesus because it hits too close to home.

b. **You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts:** It is one thing to **justify yourselves before men**, because smooth words and a “loving” smile can deceive men. **But God knows your hearts** - when you are serve another master, it is impossible to be justified before God, no matter what men think.

c. God judges our hearts with a different set of values: **for what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.** Men may honor you because of your wealth and your public display of spirituality. But God sees who you really are.

6. (Luk_16:16-18) The unchanging nature of God’s law.

“The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail. Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from *her* husband commits adultery.”

a. **The law and the prophets were until John:** Now, **since that time** (the time ending with John the Baptist’s ministry) the good news of a new covenant is presented, with an order that is different than the law, yet it fulfills the law.

b. **The kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it:** In Jesus’ day, there were hundreds of revolutionaries willing to use great violence to bring in the kingdom of God. While we do not imitate their violence, we do imitate their dedication, their willingness to sacrifice, and their passion to see the Messiah reign. We are at war!

i. But the new order that we must press into is not an order of rebellion; it is a new order of submission and obedience to God; His new order fulfills the law.

c. **Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery:** For example, the law concerning

marriage is still binding - no matter how some Rabbis may try to explain it away. Some Rabbis taught that if a woman burned her husband's breakfast, it was grounds for divorce. Others considered finding a prettier woman to be acceptable grounds for divorce.

i. Jesus here teaches the ideal regarding marriage and divorce, and it is dangerous for us to for doctrine on isolated statements of Jesus without taking into account the whole counsel of His teaching.

d. But if you won't respond to what God has clearly shown you (such as what the Bible teaches about divorce), how can you hope to receive His Word on other things? We must be careful that we never do what the Pharisees did: show an outward agreement with the word of God, but inwardly resisting it and thus denying it.

B. The story of Lazarus and the rich man.

1. (Luk_16:19-21) Lazarus and the rich man on earth.

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores."

a. **There was a certain rich man:** Significantly, Jesus does not present this story as a *parable*, and in no other parable does Jesus actually name an individual (as the poor man is named here). We have every reason to believe that Jesus is giving us an actual "case history," that He would know because He is the man from heaven.

b. **Clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day:** The rich man's wealth is shown by his clothing (luxurious, expensive clothes), and by his excess with food (most people in that culture **fared sumptuously** only a few times a year).

i. The rich man is unnamed, but is traditionally given the name *Dives*, which is simply Latin for "rich."

c. **The dogs came and licked his sores:** The destitute poverty of Lazarus is shown by the fact that he must resort to begging with the dogs.

2. (Luk_16:22-26) Lazarus and the rich man in Hades.

“So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’”

a. **So it was that the beggar died:** Lazarus was so destitute that he did not even get a burial. But because of his devotion to God, he ends up with Abraham and all the righteous in the afterlife.

i. We must never think that Lazarus was saved by his poverty, any more than we would think that the rich man was damned by his wealth. Lazarus must have had a true relationship of faith with the true God.

ii. Lazarus doesn’t seem to ask God, “Why was it so unfair on earth?” Now he knows, now all questions are answered.

b. **And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom:** The rich man is also not far from Lazarus; yet he is a world apart. His place full of torment and pain; now, the rich man is the beggar, pleading with Lazarus for a drop of water.
i. Again, the rich man was not in torment because he was rich. If it were so, then it would be a contradiction for

Abraham to be shown as righteous, because he was far richer than “Dives” could ever have been.

ii. The only sin charged to the rich man was selfishness - all he lived for was himself. This was enough. He could say, “I never hurt anybody,” but living purely for yourself is enough to condemn you.

iii. Also, this story is the *contrast* to the parable of the unjust steward; the rich man was one who didn’t use *any* of his resources to prepare for the world to come.

c. **Hades**: Jesus describes **Hades** (called *Sheol* in the Old Testament), which was the common abode of the dead.

i. Some who are in Hades rest in comfort (**the bosom of Abraham**), but others are in fires of torment.

ii. **Hades** is not the *Lake of Fire* - what we usually think of as *Hell*, referred to in Rev_20:15, and called *Gehenna* in the Old Testament. Instead, **Hades** is a “waiting place” until the day of final judgment (Rev_20:11-13).

iii. Jesus went to **Hades**, but did not stay there (Act_2:24-27, Act_2:31). Jesus preached in Hades (1Pe_3:18-19). Jesus set the captives in Hades free (Eph_4:8-9, Isa_61:1). Jesus’ work and preaching offered salvation for those who in faith awaited it (Heb_11:39-40), and sealed the condemnation of the wicked and unbelieving.

iv. Since Jesus’ work on the cross (the believer’s day of judgment), there is no “waiting” for believers who die. They go directly to the presence of the Lord (2Co_5:6-8).

3. (Luk_16:27-31) The rich man’s request.

“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’

But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

a. **Send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them:** *Now* the rich man is concerned for his brothers on earth. The first indication we have that the rich man thought of anyone else comes after it is too late.

b. **If one goes to them from the dead, they will repent:** The rich man thought that if someone came from the dead, it would be more convincing than the word of God. But it wouldn't be more convincing, because if they won't believe because of God's Word, **neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.**

i. "I do believe that Lazarus from Abraham's bosom would not be so good a preacher as a man who has not died, but whose lips have been touched with a live coal from off the altar."

(Spurgeon)

ii. Of course, One *did* rise from the dead - *Jesus*, yet they did not believe then.

iii. Jesus exposes the fallacy of trusting in signs to bring people to Jesus. We often think that if people would see a spectacular enough sign, they would be *compelled* to believe. But what creates faith unto salvation is hearing the word of God (Rom_10:17). God, working through His word, has power unto salvation.

iv. The rich man wasn't lost because he was rich. He was lost because he did not listen to the law and the prophets. Will you be lost for the same reason?

(Luk 16:2) So⁵ he called the manager⁶ in and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you?⁷ Turn in the account of your administration,⁸

because you can no longer be my manager.'

(Luk 16:3) Then⁹ the manager said to himself, 'What should I do, since my master is taking my position¹⁰ away from

me? I'm not strong enough to dig,¹¹ and I'm too ashamed¹² to beg.

(Luk 16:4) I know¹³ what to do so that when I am put out of management, people will welcome me into their homes.'¹⁴

(Luk 16:5) So¹⁵ he contacted¹⁶ his master's debtors one by one. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

(Luk 16:6) The man¹⁷ replied, 'A hundred measures¹⁸ of olive oil.' The manager¹⁹ said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write fifty.'²⁰

(Luk 16:7) Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' The second man²¹ replied, 'A hundred measures²² of wheat.' The manager²³ said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'²⁴

(Luk 16:8) The²⁵ master commended the dishonest²⁶ manager because he acted shrewdly.²⁷ For the people²⁸ of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their contemporaries²⁹ than the people³⁰ of light.

(Luk 16:9) And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by how you use worldly wealth,³¹ so that when it runs out you will be welcomed³²

into the eternal homes.³³

(Luk 16:10) "The one who is faithful in a very little³⁴ is also faithful in much, and the one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.

(Luk 16:11) If then you haven't been trustworthy³⁵ in handling worldly wealth,³⁶ who will entrust you with the true riches?³⁷

(Luk 16:12) And if you haven't been trustworthy³⁸ with someone else's property,³⁹ who will give you your own⁴⁰ ?

(Luk 16:13) No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate⁴¹ the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise⁴² the other. You cannot serve God and money."⁴³

(Luk 16:14) ***More Warnings about the Pharisees***

The Pharisees⁴⁴ (who loved money) heard all this and ridiculed⁴⁵ him.

(Luk 16:15) But⁴⁶ Jesus⁴⁷ said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in men's eyes,⁴⁸ but God knows your hearts. For what is highly prized⁴⁹ among men is utterly detestable⁵⁰ in God's sight.

(Luk 16:16) "The law and the prophets were in force⁵¹ until John;⁵² since then,⁵³ the good news of the kingdom of God⁵⁴ has been proclaimed, and everyone is urged to enter it.⁵⁵

(Luk 16:17) But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tiny stroke of a letter⁵⁶ in the law to become void.⁵⁷

(Luk 16:18) "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries⁵⁸ someone else commits adultery, and the one who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

(Luk 16:19) ***The Rich Man and Lazarus***

"There was a rich man who dressed in purple⁵⁹ and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously⁶⁰ every day.

(Luk 16:20) But at his gate lay⁶¹ a poor man named Lazarus⁶² whose body was covered with sores,⁶³

(Luk 16:21) who longed to eat⁶⁴ what fell from the rich man's table. In addition, the dogs⁶⁵ came and licked⁶⁶ his sores.

(Luk 16:22) "Now⁶⁷ the poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side.⁶⁸ The⁶⁹ rich man also died and was buried.⁷⁰

(Luk 16:23) And in hell,⁷¹ as he was in torment,⁷² he looked up⁷³ and saw Abraham far off with Lazarus at his side.⁷⁴

(Luk 16:24) So⁷⁵ he called out,⁷⁶ 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus⁷⁷ to dip the tip of his finger⁷⁸ in water and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish⁷⁹ in this fire.'⁸⁰

(Luk 16:25) But Abraham said, 'Child,⁸¹ remember that in your lifetime you received your good things and Lazarus likewise bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in anguish.⁸²

(Luk 16:26) Besides all this,⁸³ a great chasm⁸⁴ has been fixed between us,⁸⁵ so that those who want to cross over from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.'

(Luk 16:27) So⁸⁶ the rich man⁸⁷ said, 'Then I beg you, father — send Lazarus⁸⁸ to my father's house (Luk 16:28) (for I have five brothers) to warn⁸⁹ them so that they don't come⁹⁰ into this place of torment.'

(Luk 16:29) But Abraham said,⁹¹ 'They have Moses and the prophets; they must respond to⁹² them.'

(Luk 16:30) Then⁹³ the rich man⁹⁴ said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead⁹⁵ goes to them, they will repent.'

(Luk 16:31) He⁹⁶ replied to him, 'If they do not respond to⁹⁷ Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.' "⁹⁸

(Luk 17:1) ***Sin, Forgiveness, Faith, and Service***

Jesus¹ said to his disciples, "Stumbling blocks are sure to come, but woe² to the one through whom they come!

(Guzik)

Luk 17:1-37

Luke 17 - DUTY, THANKFULNESS AND THE KINGDOM

A. Forgiveness, faith and duty.

1. (Luk_17:1-2) The danger of stumbling another.

Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe *to him* through whom they do come!

It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

a. Jesus, through the account of Lazarus and the rich man, has made it clear that eternity is for real, and no one from beyond will come back to warn us. It is all the more imperative how we live and show Jesus to others on this side of eternity, because right now counts forever.

b. **It is impossible:** It is inevitable that people be offended, but woe to the person through whom those offenses come. What does Jesus mean when He speaks of **offenses**?

i. The Greek word used here is *skandalon*, and it comes from the word for a bent-stick - the stick that springs the trap or sets the bait. It also was used for a stumbling block, something that people trip over.

ii. In the Bible, sometimes a *skandalon* is good - such as the way that people “trip” over Jesus, and are offended at the gospel (Rom_9:33, 1Co_1:23, Gal_5:11).

iii. But among brothers in Jesus, a *skandalon* is bad. It can be false counsel (Mat_16:23), and it can be leading a brother into sin by your “liberty” (Rom_14:13). Division and false teaching brings a *skandalon* among God’s people (Rom_16:17).

c. **Woe to him through whom they do come:** Essentially, Jesus is saying: “People are going to take the bait - but woe to you if you offer the hook. People are going to trip up - but woe to you if you set the stumbling block in their way.”

i. It would **better** for such a one to die a horrible death, such as having a millstone hung around your neck and being thrown into the sea.

ii. This is a lesson that the church learned the hard way in trying to help God to curse the Jewish race for their rejection of the Messiah; the curse came back on the church worse than ever. If someone seems ripe for the judgment or discipline of God, let God do it. Get out of the way. God doesn’t need you as an instrument of His judgment, only as an instrument of His love

d. 1Jn_2:10 explains the solution to being a *skandalon* to others - love: *He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.* If we love our brother, we will not bring an offense into their life.

2. (Luk_17:3-4) If someone stumbles you, deal with it and forgive them.

“Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

a. **If your brother sins against you, rebuke him:** When someone sins against you, you should not pretend that it never happened. You need to **rebuke** that brother in love.

i. Love is the rule here; we obviously can’t walk around keep a record of every little offense committed against us. One aspect of the fruit of the Spirit is *longsuffering* (Gal_5:22), and we need to be able to suffer long with the slights and petty offences that come our way in daily living. Eph_4:2 says that we should love *with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love.* Don’t be too sensitive; bear with one another.

ii. But in love, when we are sinned against in a significant way, we must follow Eph_4:15 as the pattern: we need to speak the truth in love. Love isn’t going to *other* people about it; love isn’t bottling it up inside of you. Love is getting it straight with the person who sinned against you.

b. Jesus challenges us: **if he repents, forgive him.** There is no option. When the person who offended you repents, you must **forgive** them.

i. What do we do with the person who has never repented? Do we forgive them? In a sense, we can not forgive them without doing violence to the whole idea of what forgiveness is all about. God does not forgive us apart from repentance; and when we are forgiven, all relationship is restored with Him. Are we more forgiving than God is?

ii. Even if you can't forgive someone because they won't repent, you also *can not* harbor the pain and bitterness of the offense in your heart. You must do what Jesus did in Luk_23:34

when He prayed *Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do* - you must commit your heart to God in heaven, loving your enemy and praying for them.

iii. Joseph is another marvelous example of this. When he told his brothers who had hated him and sold him into slavery *you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good* (Gen_50:20), he didn't come to that realization at that moment. That was the state of his heart for a long time; but relationship could only really be restored after the brothers had repented and Joseph spoke healing, forgiving words to them - and backed it up with actions.

c. **And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, "I repent," you shall forgive him:** Though real forgiveness can't happen until there is repentance, we are not permitted to judge another's repentance. If someone had sinned against me **seven times in a day**, and kept asking me to forgive them, I might think that they were not really sincere. Yet Jesus commands me to still forgive them and restore them.

3. (Luk_17:5-6) Great faith is needed to get along with people like this.

And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

a. **Increase our faith:** On this occasion, the disciples are extremely perceptive. They recognize that great faith in God is needed to get along with people in this forgiving, non-offending way.

b. **If you have faith as a mustard seed:** We usually think of faith as being exercised with dramatic, miraculous works.

That may be true, but the greatest miracles of faith have to do with the restoration of relationships.

i. The roots of the **mulberry tree** were thought to be extraordinarily strong; it was thought that this tree could stay rooted for six hundred years.

ii. You may have unforgiveness and bitterness that is deeply rooted within you; it may be like one of those trees that sends down deep, strong roots. But through faith, Jesus can rip those roots clean out; it can **be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea**.

iii. "No duty required of men and women more grates upon flesh and blood than this of forgiving injuries, nothing that the most of people find harder to put in practice; so as indeed where there is not a root of faith, this fruit will not be found." (Poole) c. **As a mustard seed**: The faith that we must have is a faith that has more to do with what *kind* of faith it is than with *how much* faith there is. A small amount of faith - as much **as a mustard seed** (a very small seed) - can accomplish great things, if that small amount of faith is placed in a great and mighty God.

i. Little faith can accomplish great things; but great faith can accomplish even greater things.

What matters most is what our faith is in, the *object* of our faith. "The eye cannot see itself.

Did you ever see your own eye? In a mirror you may have done so, but that was only a reflection of it. And you may, in like manner, see the evidence of your faith, but you cannot look at the faith itself. Faith looks away to itself to the object of faith, even to Christ."

(Spurgeon)

4. (Luk_17:7-10) We can't put God into debt to us; anything we do for Him is small repayment for His work in our life.

"And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird

yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

a. **We are unprofitable servants:** The kind of attitude Jesus is speaking about is not a false humility, the kind of attitude that says "I'm no good at anything"; it is not an admission that we do nothing good or pleasing to God.

b. **We have done what was our duty to do:** This is realizing that we are forever in God's debt; an understanding that our work for Him is never done.

i. This is why it is so important for Bible teachers to emphasize what the Bible itself emphasizes - what God has done for us. When we realize all that God has done for us in Jesus, we *want* to serve Him out of gratitude.

ii. When our hearts are right, we live and act as if we are happy to have the *privilege* of being *allowed* to serve God.

c. Not enough Christians have this attitude today. Instead, many today often want to project a "super-Christian" image that makes them anything but **unprofitable servants**. We only think that we are better than others are when we look to man, not Jesus.

i. Every Christian is a "super-Christian" in Jesus. Truly spiritually mature believers will not be proud or arrogant about their spiritual "level."

ii. *If anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.* (Gal_6:3-4)

B. The cleansing of ten lepers.

1. (Luk_17:11-14) The healing of the lepers.

Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He

entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up *their* voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw *them*, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

a. **As He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers:** It was not unusual for these lepers to congregate with one another. They were outcasts from society at large, and had no company other than other lepers.

b. **Go, show yourselves to the priests:** It is remarkable that Jesus asks them to go to the priests while they are still lepers. This was truly stepping out in faith, like putting on the new man even when we still look and feel like the old man.

i. Of course, this is exactly what we are called to do as followers of Jesus: *that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.* (Eph_4:22-24)

c. **And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed:** Just as God blessed the faith of the lepers to step out as the new man even when they feel like the old, so will He bless our faith.

2. (Luk_17:15-19) Only one out of ten of the lepers return to give thanks.

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

a. **And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God:** Only one came back to give thanks; and he was the *unlikely* one - **a Samaritan**. And, though he was only one, at least he was very **loud** about his thanks!

b. **Were there not ten cleansed?** Jesus *missed* the nine who did not return to give thanks. He wondered where they were. Jesus also notices our lack of gratitude.

i. We would think that everyone who would pray would also praise God; but this is sadly not always the case. What possible excuse is there for this?

ii. We can always find reason for gratitude before God. Matthew Henry, the famous Bible commentator, was robbed of his wallet once. He wrote in his diary that night all the things he was thankful about:

o First, that he had never been robbed before.

o Second, that though they took his wallet, they did not take his life.

o Third, because even though they took it all, it wasn't very much.

o Finally, because he was the one who was robbed and not the one who was robbing c. **Your faith has made you well:**

There was an extra healing for this tenth leper. When Jesus said this, He likely meant God's work within the man's heart. The other lepers had whole bodies, but sick hearts.

C. The coming of the kingdom.

1. (Luk_17:20-21) If you want to know about Jesus' kingdom, get to know the King.

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

a. **When He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come:** We can just imagine a hostile Pharisee coming to Jesus, and demanding Him to

either “put up” and produce the Kingdom of the Messiah, or to “shut up” and stop claiming He was the Messiah.

i. In Jesus’ day, just like our own, people were longing for the coming of the Messiah. They knew the prophecies in the Old Testament which spoke of the glory of the coming Messiah; they wanted that kind of life and earth *now*.

b. **The kingdom of God does not come with observation:** Jesus made it clear to the Pharisee asking the question that you won’t find the **kingdom of God** through a hostile questioning of Jesus. The ancient Greek word translated **observation** is better-translated, *hostile examination*. Jesus tells the Pharisees that their hostile, doubting eyes are unable to see or receive the kingdom of God.

i. The verb from which the word **observation** comes from is used often in the New Testament and in the Lxx; it means “hostile observation.”

c. **For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you:** Where will they find the kingdom of God? Jesus tells them that the kingdom is right in their midst! **Within you** could be better translated *in your midst* or *among you*. The kingdom of God was among them because the King was among them!

i. This is not some mystical revelation by Jesus that in some seed form, the Kingdom of God is within everyone in a New Age sense. After all, Jesus would not have told Pharisees that the kingdom of God was within *them*. His statement calls attention to Himself, not to man.

ii. Like many today, the Pharisees *said* they wanted the Kingdom of God to come; but you don’t want the Kingdom if you reject the King.

2. (Luk_17:22-24) Jesus’ kingdom won’t come immediately in the disciple’s day.

Then He said to the disciples, “The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see *it*. And they will say to you, ‘Look here!’ or ‘Look

there!’ Do not go after *them* or follow *them*. For as the lightning that flashes out of one *part* under heaven shines to the other *part* under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.”

a. **The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it:**

When Jesus left this earth, the days came when Jesus’ disciples - both near and far off - would long for the Messiah’s return.

b. **And they will say to you, ‘Look here!’ or ‘Look there!’** Satan would know how to take advantage of that longing; there would be many who claimed to be the Messiah who would come before Jesus actually returned. It is essential that these false Messiah do not deceive us.

c. David Koresh, Jim Jones, Sun Myung Moon, and many, many others have all claimed to be the Messiah.

Many Orthodox Jews thought that a Brooklyn Rabbi named Mendel Schneerson was the Messiah, and Messianic fervor heated up in Israel. Yellow billboards were erected across Israel with the slogan PREPARE

FOR THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH. Bumper stickers and electric signs on cars said the same thing, and one group took out a full page ad in the New York Times announcing “The Time for Your Redemption Has Arrived.”

i. Dr. Charles Fineberg, a noted Jewish-Christian scholar, says that in the course of Israel’s history since the time of our Lord, sixty-four different individuals have appeared claiming to be the Messiah.

d. **For as the lightning that flashes:** The return of Jesus will be seen by all, just as lightning that flashes across the sky is seen by all. This is despite what some groups like the Jehovah’s Witnesses say - that Jesus returned “secretly” in 1915.

3. (Luk_17:25) Jesus’ kingdom cannot come until He finishes His work on earth.

But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

a. **But first He must suffer:** There is a tendency in all followers of Jesus to skip the cross and go straight to the Kingdom of God; but the Kingdom of God can't come until the King goes to the cross.

b. Why should it be Jesus who rules and reigns? Because He has fulfilled His own word, and we are called to follow Him in the same way.

i. *If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.* (Mar_9:35) ii. *Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.* (Mat_20:26)

c. Jesus can only come again in glory because He came first in humility and submission unto death.

4. (Luk_17:26-30) The coming of the King will be a great surprise.

"And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

a. **And as it was in the days of Noah:** By showing the similarity to Noah's day, Jesus describes a world that is functioning in a "business as usual" way when He returns. People **ate, drank . . . married wives, they were given in marriage** - things carry on just as they were.

b. **Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot:** In the same way, as it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah before the destruction of those cities, so it will be before the coming of Jesus. Life will be pretty much business as usual, until sudden destruction and judgment comes.

i. Significantly, there are other passages of Scripture that seem to show that Jesus will return to an earth that will be anything *but* business as usual.

ii. *For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor shall ever be.* (Mat_24:21)

iii. *And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"* (Rev_6:15-16)

c. Which will it be? Business as usual, or hell-on-earth? The two distinct "phases" of Jesus' coming, separated by some period of time, explain the seemingly contradictory conditions which describe the condition of the world at the return of Jesus.

d. Jesus' use of the accounts of Noah and Lot as pictures of His coming shows us something important: in each case, God delivered His people, then He brought down judgment.

i. And, in each case, only those who sought after God were ready. Are you ready?

5. (Luk_17:31-33) Prepare for the coming of the King by not being attached to this world.

"In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods *are* in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it."

a. **In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away:** When Noah's flood came, you could imagine people trying to vainly keep their possessions safe while they themselves perished. Even so, if you are ready for Jesus' coming, you won't be concerned about all the stuff you leave behind. Your heart won't be on what you have in house, but on what you have in heaven.

b. **Remember Lot's wife:** Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt as she and her family escaped from Sodom; it was because she looked back (Gen_19:26). Will you be caught looking back at what is left in the world?

i. The awesome reality is this: God will give us what we really want. When we really want the things of this world, God will let us have them - for a while. But when we really want the things of God, God will also let us have them - forever.

ii. The good news is that His people *do* want these things, even though they battle against the flesh regarding them. God will finish what He has begun in you!

6. (Luk_17:34-36) When Jesus comes, some will be taken suddenly and others will be left behind.

"I tell you, in that night there will be two *men* in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two *women* will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two *men* will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."

a. **In that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left:** This passage is often applied to the rapture, a term applied to Jesus' coming for His people in the midst of a business as usual world.

i. *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. (1Th_4:16-18)*

b. **One will be taken and the other left:** You won't have time to prepare for the rapture - it will come suddenly and at an unexpected moment. The way to be ready is to be ready *now*.

c. **Two men in one bed . . . Two women will be grinding together:** Significantly, Jesus points to the fact that it is day in one part of the world while it is night on another; at the same time some are sleeping at night, others are working in a field. God will come for His people all over the earth at one moment.

d. Just as in the days of Noah and Lot, when Jesus comes, some will be taken out of the way and others will remain and be judged.

7. (Luk_17:37) All this will happen at the time when judgment is ripe.

And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

a. What does **Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together** mean? William Barclay says this was a common proverb meaning that a thing would happen when the necessary conditions were fulfilled.

b. Geldenhuys on the saying about **the eagles**: "where the spiritually dead people are, there the judgment will be executed". "Where that which is ripe for judgment is present, there also will the judgment take place."

c. Are the conditions ripe for judgment in our day?

i. The Bible describes certain political, economic, spiritual, social, and military characteristics regarding what the world will be like before His return - suffice it to say that these conditions are amply set today - the stage *is* set.

ii. 2Ti_3:1-5 tells us what the world will be like in the last days: *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its*

power. And from such people turn away! Does this sound like today?

(Luk 17:2) It would be better for him to have a millstone³ tied around his neck and be thrown into the sea⁴ than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin.⁵

(Luk 17:3) Watch⁶ yourselves! If⁷ your brother⁸ sins, rebuke him. If⁹ he repents, forgive him.

(Luk 17:4) Even if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times returns to you saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive¹⁰ him."

(Luk 17:5) The¹¹ apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"¹²

(Luk 17:6) So¹³ the Lord replied,¹⁴ "If¹⁵ you had faith the size of¹⁶ a mustard seed, you could say to this black mulberry¹⁷ tree, 'Be pulled out by the roots and planted in the sea,'¹⁸ and it would obey¹⁹ you.

(Luk 17:7) "Would any one of you say²⁰ to your slave²¹ who comes in from the field after plowing or shepherding sheep, 'Come at once and sit down for a meal'?²²

(Luk 17:8) Won't²³ the master²⁴ instead say to him, 'Get my dinner ready, and make yourself ready²⁵ to serve me while²⁶ I eat and drink. Then²⁷ you may eat and drink'?

(Luk 17:9) He won't thank the slave because he did what he was told,²⁸ will he?²⁹

(Luk 17:10) So you too, when you have done everything you were commanded to do, should say, 'We are slaves undeserving of special praise;³⁰ we have only done what was our duty.' "³¹

(Luk 17:11) ***The Grateful Leper***

Now on³² the way to Jerusalem,³³ Jesus³⁴ was passing along³⁵ between Samaria and Galilee.

(Luk 17:12) As³⁶ he was entering³⁷ a village, ten men with leprosy³⁸ met him. They³⁹ stood at a distance, (Luk 17:13) raised their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy⁴⁰ on us."

(Luk 17:14) When⁴¹ he saw them he said, "Go⁴² and show yourselves to the priests."⁴³ And⁴⁴ as they went along, they were cleansed.

(Luk 17:15) Then one of them, when he saw he was healed, turned back, praising⁴⁵ God with a loud voice.

(Luk 17:16) He⁴⁶ fell with his face to the ground⁴⁷ at Jesus' feet and thanked him.⁴⁸ (Now⁴⁹ he was a Samaritan.)⁵⁰

(Luk 17:17) Then⁵¹ Jesus said,⁵² "Were⁵³ not ten cleansed? Where are the other⁵⁴ nine?

(Luk 17:18) Was no one found to turn back and give praise to God except this foreigner?"⁵⁵

(Luk 17:19) Then⁵⁶ he said to the man,⁵⁷ "Get up and go your way. Your faith has made you well."⁵⁸

(Luk 17:20) ***The Coming of the Kingdom***

Now at one point⁵⁹ the Pharisees⁶⁰ asked Jesus⁶¹ when the kingdom of God⁶² was coming, so he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs⁶³ to be observed, (Luk 17:21) nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is⁶⁴ in your midst."⁶⁵

(Luk 17:22) ***The Coming of the Son of Man***

Then⁶⁶ he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days⁶⁷ of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.

(Luk 17:23) Then people⁶⁸ will say to you, 'Look, there he is!'⁶⁹ or 'Look, here he is!' Do not go out or chase after them.⁷⁰

(Luk 17:24) For just like the lightning flashes⁷¹ and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.⁷²

(Luk 17:25) But first he must⁷³ suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

(Luk 17:26) Just⁷⁴ as it was⁷⁵ in the days of Noah,⁷⁶ so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man.

(Luk 17:27) People⁷⁷ were eating,⁷⁸ they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage — right up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then⁷⁹ the flood came and destroyed them all.⁸⁰

(Luk 17:28) Likewise, just as it was⁸¹ in the days of Lot, people⁸² were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building; (Luk 17:29) but on the day Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.⁸³

(Luk 17:30) It will be the same on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

(Luk 17:31) On that day, anyone who is on the roof,⁸⁴ with his goods in the house, must not come down⁸⁵ to take them away, and likewise the person in the field must not turn back.

(Luk 17:32) Remember Lot's wife!⁸⁶

(Luk 17:33) Whoever tries to keep⁸⁷ his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life⁸⁸ will preserve it.

(Luk 17:34) I tell you, in that night there will be two people in one bed; one will be taken and the other left.⁸⁹

(Luk 17:35) There will be two women grinding grain together;⁹⁰ one will be taken and the other left."⁹¹

(Luk 17:36) *(TEXT OMITTED)*

(Luk 17:37) Then⁹² the disciples⁹³ said⁹⁴ to him, "Where,⁹⁵ Lord?" He replied to them, "Where the dead body⁹⁶ is, there the vultures⁹⁷ will gather."⁹⁸

(Luk 18:1) ***Prayer and the Parable of the Persistent Widow***

Then¹ Jesus² told them a parable to show them they should always³ pray and not lose heart.⁴

(Guzik)

Luk 18:1-43

Luke 18 - PRAYER, HUMILITY AND DISCIPLESHIP

A. A parable of persistence.

1. (Luk_18:1) The purpose of the parable: that we might not lose heart in prayer.

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, a. **That men always ought to pray:** Man is created with a spiritual instinct, so prayer often comes naturally. Yet obstacles come in the way of effective and constant prayer, so Jesus knew we needed to be both taught and encouraged **always . . . to pray.**

i. Jesus does not mean that we should always have our knees bent and eyes closed in prayer; but we must always be in the spirit of prayer. Many law enforcement officers always carry a gun with them, even when off duty. There is a sense in which they are never “off duty,” but always have a weapon nearby. We are to keep our weapon of prayer always near, knowing that we are never “off duty” as Christians.

ii. If we would always pray, how much sinful conduct would that keep us from? If you want to go bar hopping one evening, what if you prayed about it first? Wouldn't that quench your sinful conduct?

b. **And not lose heart:** Often we stop praying because we **lose heart.** We become discouraged and then slack off in prayer.

i. It is easy to **lose heart** in prayer because prayer is hard work that we too often approach lightly. In Col_4:12, Paul praises a man named Epaphras because he was *always laboring fervently . . . in prayers.* Paul knew that prayer was hard work that required fervent labor.

ii. It is easy to **lose heart** in prayer because the Devil hates prayer. If prayer were powerless, it would be easy!

iii. It is easy to **lose heart** in prayer because we are not always convinced of the reality of the power of prayer. Too often, prayer becomes a last resort instead of a first resource.

2. (Luk_18:2-8) The parable of the widow and the unjust judge.

Saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'" Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.

Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

a. **A judge who did not fear God nor regard man:** The judge was ungodly, both as a man and a judge.

Yet in the end he answered the woman's request. The only reason he gave in was because the woman wouldn't stop bugging him. When he complained the woman would **weary me**, it really means, "*Stun me*."

A metaphor taken from boxers, who *bruise* each other."

(Clarke) b. **Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her:** The unjust judge only reluctantly answered the woman's request, but God *loves* to answer our prayers, and He even helps us when we pray. God is *on your side* when you pray!

i. The woman had to overcome the judge's reluctance to help. We often *feel* that we must do the same when we pray - overcome God's reluctance by our persistence. But this misses the point of the parable entirely. Jesus is not saying **that men always out to pray and not lose heart** because God is reluctant, but because He *isn't*, and that is our encouragement to prayer.

ii. Then why does it *seem* that we must overcome reluctance in God? The delays in prayer are not needed to change God, but to change us. Persistence in prayer brings a

transforming element into our lives, building into us the character of God Himself. It is a way that God builds into us a heart that cares about things the same way He does.

iii. Both Jesus (Mar_14:39) and Paul (2Co_12:8) prayed repeatedly for the same thing.

However, we must guard against a persistence of *unbelief* - repeating prayer with the attitude that God never heard us the first time.

c. **Shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him:** This parable has a unique approach. Obviously, God is not the unjust judge; but if the unjust judge will answer the persistent request, how much more will a righteous God?

i. Sometimes we think that God delays because He is unjust or because He is unfair. That isn't the case at all. He is not like the unjust judge, so we should keep praying to the God who will resolve all things righteously. "Too many prayers are like boy's runaway knocks, given, and then the giver is away before the door can be opened." (Spurgeon)

ii. Our God is a righteous, wonderful Judge:

- o We come to a judge of perfect, good character.

- o We come to a judge who loves to care for His children.

- o We come to a judge who is kind and gracious.

- o We come to a judge who *knows* us.

- o We come to this judge with an advocate, a friend who will plead our case before the judge.

- o We come to the judge with promises to encourage us.

- o We come to the judge with the right of constant access, to a judge who has a personal interest in our case.

d. **When the Son of Man comes:** This ties Jesus' thought to His words about His coming at the end of the previous chapter. Unless we know who God is (He is *not* like the unjust judge) and unless we are people who pray without losing heart, we don't have the kind of faith Jesus will look for when He returns.

B. Lessons on humility.

1. (Luk_18:9-14) A parable to rebuke the self righteous.

Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men; extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

a. **To some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:** The connection between those who **trusted in themselves that they were righteous** and those who **despised others** is almost inevitable. If I credit myself for my "great, spiritual walk with God," then it is an easy thing to despise you for your "low, carnal walk with God."

b. **Two men went up to the temple to pray:** Both men prayed, but both men did not come to God the same way. The Pharisee and his prayer were entirely self-centered; he **prayed thus with himself**, and in his short prayer he repeats **I** five times.

i. It is entirely possible to address your words to God, but actually be praying to yourself, because your focus is on yourself, not on God. Your passion is for your agenda, not God's.

Your attitude is *mine will be done* not *Thy will be done*.

ii. **God, I thank You that I am not like other men:** How could the Pharisee have such a high opinion of himself? It isn't hard when you compare yourself to man (**even as this tax collector**). You can always find someone worse.

iii. **I fast twice a week:** In those days many Jews fasted on the second and fifth days of each week, because they believed that Moses went up on Mount Sinai to receive the law on the fifth day of the week, and that he came down with the law on the second day of the week.

iv. “What the Pharisee said about himself was true. His trouble was not that he was not far enough along the road, but that he was on the wrong road altogether.” (Morris) c. We wonder how anyone could be so proud before God; but we really can be - though we cover it with a spiritual veneer. One Rabbi, Rabbi Simeon, the son of Jochai, exemplified this kind of Pharisaical pride when he said: “If there were only thirty righteous persons in the world, I and my son would make two of them; but if there were but twenty, I and my son would be of the number; and if there were but *ten*, I and my son would be of the number; and if there were but *five*, I and my son would be of the five; and if there were but *two*, I and my son would be those two; and if there were but *one*, myself should be that *one*.”

(Clarke)

i. This is from an actual prayer of Rabbi Nehunia: “I give thanks to Thee, O Lord my God, that Thou has set my portion with those who sit in the House of Learning, and Thou hast not set my portion with those who sit in street corners, for I rise early and they rise early, but I rise early for words of Torah and they rise early for frivolous talk; I labor and they labor, but I labor and receive a reward and they labor and do not receive a reward; I run and they run, but I run to the life of the future world and they run to the pit of destruction.” (Morris) d. **The tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “God, be merciful to me a sinner!”** The Pharisee relied on his own power and deeds before God, but the tax collector relied on the mercy and compassion of God. He recognized that he was a **sinner** who needed the mercy of God.

i. We can imagine the Pharisee praying with eloquent words and flowing, spiritual style; anyone who heard him pray would say that he was a spiritual man. And the tax collector would pray awkwardly, with halting phrases and fear; but his prayer pleased to God.

e. Why would the tax collector **beat his breast**? The idea was that you were so aware of the sin and corruption of your heart that you would hit at your own heart as a punishment. The verb tense of **beat his breast** describes a continual action - he kept on doing it i. The ancient Greek word for **be merciful** is *hilaskomai*; it is actually the word for an atoning sacrifice. The fullest sense of what the tax collector is saying is, "God, be merciful to me through Your atoning sacrifice for sins, because I am a sinner." The only other place this word is used in the New Testament is in Heb_2:17, where it is translated *propitiation*.

f. **This man went down to his house justified rather than the other**: The justification of the tax collector was immediate. He humbly came to God on the basis of His atoning sacrifice, and was justified. He didn't earn his justification, he didn't have a probationary period; he was simply **justified**.

g. Jesus applies the message of the parable: **everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted** . Essentially, the Pharisee saw prayer and his spiritual life as a way to be exalted, but the tax collector approached God in humility.

i. True humbleness is simply seeing things the way they *are*. The Pharisee saw himself as something great when he wasn't, and the tax collector saw himself as a sinner needing God's mercy, which he was.

ii. We gain nothing by coming to God in the lie of pride. The principle *God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble* is so important God repeats it three times in the Scriptures (Pro_3:34, Jam_4:6, 1Pe_5:5).

2. (Luk_18:15-17) Jesus uses children as examples of humility.

Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

a. **The also brought infants to Him that He might touch them:** Children love to come to Jesus, and it says something about our Savior that children loved Him and that He loved children. Jesus was not a mean, sour man because children don't love mean, sour people.

i. **That He might touch them:** Jesus knew that these **infants**, though they did not understand speech or Jesus' eloquent teaching, could respond to a touch. Jesus knows how to communicate to you in the way you need.

b. **Let the little children come to Me:** Because children love to come to Jesus, we should never block the way - or fail to provide them a way. We know more about Jesus than the women of Judea did. Is there any good reason for us to not bring our own children to Jesus?

c. **For of such is the kingdom of God:** Children receive the blessing of Jesus without trying to make themselves worthy of it, or pretending they don't need it. We need to receive God's blessings the same way.

C. Riches and true discipleship.

1. (Luk_18:18-19) A rich young ruler comes to Jesus.

Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God."

a. **Good Teacher:** This was a title never applied to other Rabbis in Jesus' day, because it implied sinlessness, a complete goodness. Jesus, and everyone else, recognized that this was a unique title.

i. “There is no instance in the whole Talmud of a rabbi being addressed as ‘Good Master’”

(Plummer, cited in Geldenhuys). The insisted only calling God “good.”

b. **Why do you call Me Good:** This is not a denial of deity. Instead, Jesus invites the young man to reflect upon it. It is as if Jesus says, “do you really know what you are saying when you call Me **Good Teacher?**”

c. **What shall I do to inherit eternal life:** If the man really knew who Jesus was, he wouldn’t ask Jesus for advice about how to get to heaven. He would be on his knees before Jesus, asking for His mercy and grace - as the tax collector did earlier in the chapter.

i. The man also didn’t really know who *he* was. He thought that he was righteous, and didn’t really know the kind of person he was. When you don’t know who Jesus really is, you probably won’t know who you are either. And knowing Jesus comes first.

2. (Luk_18:20-23) Jesus’ counsel to the young man.

“You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

a. **You know the commandments:** This man was a *ruler*, and educated Jew of his day, so of course he knew the commandments. In His follow-up, Jesus is careful to quote to him only those commandments that have to do what is often called the second table of the law - how we treat one another.

i. Incidentally, each one of these commandments is pure, just, and good. How great the world would be if everyone

would live by just the five commandments Jesus mentions here?

b. **All these things I have kept from my youth:** In his reply, this ruler says of himself that he has **kept** all these commandments, and that he has done so since his **youth**. Is this possible? Yes and no; *yes* according to the way these commandments were commonly interpreted, but *no* according to the true meaning God had for these commandments.

i. In Php_3:6, Paul says that in the eyes of the religious Jews, he could say that for him, *concerning the righteousness which is in the law*, [he was] *blameless*.

ii. Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, gave us the real meaning of the law - it goes to the heart, not just to your actions. You can have a heart filled with adultery even if you never commit it; a heart filled with murder even if you never do it; a heart that steals even if you never steal. And God looks at the heart as well as the actions.

c. **You still lack one thing:** Though the man had everything - riches, an outwardly righteous life, respect, prestige, Jesus could still say *You still lack one thing*. The man had everything but knew that he did not have eternal life - so he really had nothing.

i. In Mark's recording of this incident, he adds one aspect that Luke left out. Mark says: *Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him . . .* (Mar_10:21). Jesus was filled with loving compassion for this man because his life was so empty. He had climbed to the top of the ladder of success, only to find his ladder leaned against the wrong building.

d. **You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me:** Instead of challenging the man's fulfillment of the law (which Jesus had every right to do), Jesus points him to what is commonly called the first table of the law -

the laws having to do with our relationship with God. Jesus challenged him to put God first; to fulfill the law to *love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength* (Deu_6:5).

i. So, could the man love God more than his wealth? No, he could not, even though Jesus specifically promised him **treasure in heaven**. The man was more interested in man's earthly treasures than in God's heavenly treasures.

ii. Essentially, this man is an idolater - riches are his God, not the true God of the Bible. He puts money first.

iii. Men will be tested by both tables of the law. It isn't enough to do good by our fellow man and be decent folk; we must do right by God, and give Him the glory and honor He deserves.

e. **He became very sorrowful, for he was very rich:** We notice the balance. **Very sorrowful**, and **very rich**. The man's riches were an anchor dragging down his soul, and because **he was very rich**, the anchor was very heavy.

i. Jesus' purpose wasn't to make the man sad; but he could only be happy by doing what Jesus told him to do.

f. Then how can we be saved? This man, like all men by nature, has an orientation towards a works-righteousness; he asked *what shall I do*. If we really want to do the works of God, it must begin with believing on Jesus, whom the Father has sent (Joh_6:29).

3. (Luk_18:24-27) The problem of riches.

And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

a. **He became very sorrowful:** The rich man was sorry, and now Jesus was sorry. Jesus did not want the man to walk

away in his idolatry, loving his riches more than God. Yet, Jesus still let him walk away.

b. How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! Jesus makes it clear: *riches are an obstacle to the kingdom of God*. They are not an insurmountable obstacle, but they are an obstacle nonetheless.

i. We usually only think of *poverty* as a problem. Jesus reminds us that riches may present a much more serious problem. Riches are dangerous because they tend to make us satisfied with this life, instead of longing for the age to come. Also, riches often must be acquired at the expense of acquiring God.

ii. We often excuse ourselves from what Jesus says here because we don't consider ourselves rich. Yet who among us would not be considered richer than this rich young ruler was?

c. For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God: With this image, Jesus illustrates the difficulty riches present to entering the kingdom of God.

i. "Attempts have been made to explain Jesus' words about the *camel* and the *eye of a needle* in terms of a camel shuffling through a small postern gate, or by reading *kamilon* 'cable' for *kamelon* 'camel'. Such 'explanations' are misguided. They miss the point that Jesus is using a humorous illustration." (Morris)

d. Who then can be saved? We are like the disciples; it is hard for us to see how riches would hinder us from the kingdom of God. We think that riches can only bring blessing and good.

i. The words of Jesus amaze the disciples because they assume that riches are always a sign of God's blessing and favor. After all, if the rich aren't saved, then who is?

ii. Remember what Paul said to Timothy: *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into*

many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows (1Ti_6:9-10).

e. **The things which are impossible with men are possible with God:** However, God's grace is sufficient to save the rich man. We know of many rich men in the Bible who were saved, including Zaccheus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Barnabas.

4. (Luk_18:28-30) Our reward and the solution to the problem of riches.

Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You." So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life."

a. **See, we have left all and followed You:** In contrast to the rich young ruler, the disciples **have** left all to follow Jesus, so what will be their reward? Why does this question seem so typical of Peter?

i. Of course, there is a special honor for these disciples. They have a special place in judgment, probably in the sense of administration in the millennial Kingdom. As well, the apostles had the honor of helping to provide a singular foundation for the church (Eph_2:20), and have a special tribute in the New Jerusalem (Rev_20:14).

b. **Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left:** The twelve may have their unique reward, but there will be universal honor for all who sacrifice for Jesus' sake. Whatever has been given up for Him will be returned to us a many times over - in addition to **everlasting life**.

i. **Many times over** is obviously not meant in a material sense, Jesus is promising a hundred mothers and a hundred

wives. **Many times over** is literal, but spiritual in its fulfillment.

c. Having and keeping the heart of a giver will keep you from being corrupted by riches. We all want to do what Psa_62:10 says: *If riches increase, do not set your heart on them*, and giving is key.

5. (Luk_18:31-34) Jesus again announces His coming fate in Jerusalem.

Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge *Him* and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.” But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.

a. **He took the twelve aside and said to them:** The disciples were probably thinking pretty highly of themselves at this point; after all, they had given up everything to follow Jesus. But Jesus lets them know that they really haven’t, and will never, give up anything comparable to what He gives up.

b. **For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon:** Significantly, Jesus mentions the *shame* of His suffering. Jesus was put to the most terrible emotional humiliation in His death, and it was done out of love for us.

i. This reminds us of Jesus’ remarkable “long term courage.” He didn’t “have” to go to Jerusalem, but He did with full knowledge of His fate. Jesus was by no means a blind victim of circumstances.

c. Sadly, the disciples **understood none of these things**. They heard the words right from the mouth of Jesus, and saw the expression on His face, and still did not understand. We can never see God’s truth unless He opens our eyes.

i. Why didn't God open their eyes to this truth? Probably because they couldn't handle it yet.

If they really knew what would happen to Jesus, and how different it would be than their own conceptions of riding the coattails of the Messiah to glory, they might have given up right then and there.

ii. "Only at a somewhat later time . . . do the Jewish rabbis appear to have taught that there would be a suffering Messiah ('Messiah ben Joseph') as well as a triumphant Messiah ('Messiah ben Judah')." (Geldenhuis)

6. (Luk_18:35-43) Jesus heals a blind man.

Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him.

And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise to God.

a. **He cried out all the more:** The blind man is *desperate* for Jesus; he won't be embarrassed, and he won't be shut up. He knows who Jesus is (**Son of David**, a Messianic title) and he wants Jesus!

b. **Have mercy on me:** The blind man knows what he needs from Jesus: **mercy**. He doesn't come thinking that God owes him; all he wants from Jesus is **mercy**.

c. Why did Jesus ask **What do you want Me to do for you?** Wasn't it obvious? Yet, there was real power in the man asking, and in Jesus answering. God may ask you the

same question, and we should be able to articulate an answer that glorifies Him!

d. **Lord, that I may receive my sight:** The blind man knew how to submit to Jesus; he calls Him **Lord**.

e. **Receive your sight; your faith has made you well:** How did the **faith** of the blind man save him?

- o Because it was faith that wanted Jesus.

- o Because it was faith that knew who He was.

- o Because it was faith that knew what he deserved from Jesus.

- o Because it was faith that could tell Jesus what it wanted.

- o Because it was faith that could call Jesus *Lord*.

That is saving faith!

f. **He received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God:** The blind man, now healed and saved, began to follow Jesus. The way of Jesus became his way - and this is especially significant when we consider that Jesus was on His way towards Jerusalem to die.

(Luk 18:2) He said,⁵ "In a certain city⁶ there was a judge⁷ who neither feared God nor respected people.⁸

(Luk 18:3) There was also a widow⁹ in that city¹⁰ who kept coming¹¹ to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.'

(Luk 18:4) For¹² a while he refused, but later on¹³ he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor have regard for people,¹⁴

(Luk 18:5) yet because this widow keeps on bothering me, I will give her justice, or in the end she will wear me out¹⁵ by her unending pleas.' "¹⁶

(Luk 18:6) And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unrighteous judge says!¹⁷

(Luk 18:7) Won't¹⁸ God give justice to his chosen ones, who cry out¹⁹ to him day and night?²⁰ Will he delay²¹ long to help them?

(Luk 18:8) I tell you, he will give them justice speedily.²² Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find

faith²³ on earth?"

(Luk 18:9) ***The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector***

Jesus²⁴ also told this parable to some who were confident that they were righteous and looked down²⁵ on everyone else.

(Luk 18:10) "Two men went up²⁶ to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee²⁷ and the other a tax collector.²⁸

(Luk 18:11) The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself like this:²⁹ 'God, I thank³⁰ you that I am not like other people:³¹

extortionists,³² unrighteous people,³³ adulterers — or even like this tax collector.³⁴

(Luk 18:12) I fast twice³⁵ a week; I give a tenth³⁶ of everything I get.'

(Luk 18:13) The tax collector, however, stood³⁷ far off and would not even look up³⁸ to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, be merciful³⁹ to me, sinner that I am!'⁴⁰

(Luk 18:14) I tell you that this man went down to his home justified⁴¹ rather than the Pharisee.⁴² For everyone who exalts⁴³ himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

(Luk 18:15) ***Jesus and Little Children***

Now people⁴⁴ were even bringing their babies⁴⁵ to him for him to touch.⁴⁶ But when the disciples saw it, they began to scold those who brought them.⁴⁷

(Luk 18:16) But Jesus called for the children,⁴⁸ saying, "Let the little children come to me and do not try to stop them, for the kingdom of God⁴⁹ belongs to such as these.⁵⁰

(Luk 18:17) I tell you the truth,⁵¹ whoever does not receive⁵² the kingdom of God like a child⁵³ will never⁵⁴ enter it."

(Luk 18:18) ***The Wealthy Ruler***

Now⁵⁵ a certain ruler⁵⁶ asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"⁵⁷

(Luk 18:19) Jesus⁵⁸ said to him, "Why do you call me good?

⁵⁹ No one is good except God alone.

(Luk 18:20) You know the commandments: ' ***Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false***

testimony, honor your father and mother.' "⁶⁰

(Luk 18:21) The man⁶¹ replied, "I have wholeheartedly obeyed⁶² all these laws⁶³ since my youth."⁶⁴

(Luk 18:22) When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have⁶⁵ and give the money⁶⁶ to the poor,⁶⁷

and you will have treasure⁶⁸ in heaven. Then⁶⁹ come, follow me."

(Luk 18:23) But when the man⁷⁰ heard this he became very sad,⁷¹ for he was extremely wealthy.

(Luk 18:24) When Jesus noticed this,⁷² he said, "How hard⁷³ it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!⁷⁴

(Luk 18:25) In fact, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle⁷⁵ than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

(Luk 18:26) Those who heard this said, "Then⁷⁶ who can be saved?"⁷⁷

(Luk 18:27) He replied, "What is impossible⁷⁸ for mere humans⁷⁹ is possible for God."

(Luk 18:28) And Peter said, "Look, we have left everything we own⁸⁰ to follow you!"⁸¹

(Luk 18:29) Then⁸² Jesus⁸³ said to them, "I tell you the truth,⁸⁴ there is no one who has left home or wife or brothers⁸⁵ or parents or children for the sake of God's kingdom (Luk 18:30) who will not receive many times more⁸⁶ in this age⁸⁷ — and in the age to come, eternal life."⁸⁸

(Luk 18:31) ***Another Prediction of Jesus' Passion***

Then⁸⁹ Jesus⁹⁰ took the twelve aside and said to them, "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem,⁹¹ and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.⁹²

(Luk 18:32) For he will be handed over⁹³ to the Gentiles; he will be mocked,⁹⁴ mistreated,⁹⁵ and spat on.⁹⁶

(Luk 18:33) They will flog him severely⁹⁷ and kill him. Yet⁹⁸ on the third day he will rise again."

(Luk 18:34) But⁹⁹ the twelve¹⁰⁰ understood none of these things. This¹⁰¹ saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp¹⁰²

what Jesus meant.¹⁰³

(Luk 18:35) ***Healing a Blind Man***

As¹⁰⁴ Jesus¹⁰⁵ approached¹⁰⁶ Jericho,¹⁰⁷ a blind man was sitting by the road begging.

(Luk 18:36) When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was going on.

(Luk 18:37) They¹⁰⁸ told him, "Jesus the Nazarene is passing by."

(Luk 18:38) So¹⁰⁹ he called out,¹¹⁰ "Jesus, Son of David,¹¹¹ have mercy¹¹² on me!"

(Luk 18:39) And those who were in front¹¹³ scolded¹¹⁴ him to get him to be quiet, but he shouted¹¹⁵ even more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

(Luk 18:40) So¹¹⁶ Jesus stopped and ordered the beggar¹¹⁷ to be brought to him. When the man¹¹⁸ came near, Jesus¹¹⁹ asked him, (Luk 18:41) "What do you want me to do for you?" He replied,¹²⁰ "Lord, let me see again."¹²¹

(Luk 18:42) Jesus¹²² said to him, "Receive¹²³ your sight; your faith has healed you."¹²⁴

(Luk 18:43) And immediately he regained¹²⁵ his sight and followed Jesus,¹²⁶ praising¹²⁷ God. When¹²⁸ all the people saw it, they too¹²⁹ gave praise to God.

(Luk 19:1) ***Jesus and Zacchaeus***

Jesus¹ entered Jericho² and was passing through it.
(Guzik)

Luk 19:1-48

Luke 19 - THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

A. Jesus and Zacchaeus

1. (Luk_19:1-4) Zacchaeus climbs a tree and risks ridicule to see Jesus.

Then *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that *way*.

a. **Jesus entered and passed through Jericho:** Why did Jesus go **through Jericho** on His way to Jerusalem? Perhaps the only real reason was to meet with Zacchaeus. "There were other ways, but He went through Jericho, and the only incident recorded is this story of Zacchaeus, and I have no doubt the reason of His going was the finding of this man."
(Morgan)

b. **Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector:** Zacchaeus was not only a tax collector, but a **chief tax collector** - and men of his profession were despised among the Jews. This was not only due to man's natural hatred of taxes, but more so to the fact that the tax collector made his profit on whatever *extra* he could get away with charging his client. A tax collector was highly motivated to make the taxes as high as possible.

i. When the tax collectors came to John the Baptist, asking how they could get right with God, he told them *collect no more than what is appointed for you* (Luk_3:13). If you were a tax collector, and you were rich, you were a rogue.

ii. The name **Zacchaeus** means "pure one." This man was anything but pure - until he met Jesus.

c. Yet, Zacchaeus was a man **of short stature**. We can imagine how through is life he might make up for his small size by being specially “tough” on those whom he had to collect taxes from. If so, this would have made him all the more an outcast.

d. **He ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him:** Because Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus so badly, he didn’t mind doing something that many thought was beneath the dignity of a grown, wealthy man - he climbed up **a sycamore tree**.

i. “I wish there were more of us who did not mind being laughed at if only what we did helped us to see Jesus.” (Maclaren)

2. (Luk_19:5-6) Jesus invites Himself to Zacchaeus’ house.

And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

a. Jesus started by calling **Zacchaeus** by name. Jesus knew the importance of a person’s name.

i. In some ways, the most important thing a person has is their name. If you have a person’s name, you have the person. If you don’t have their name, they don’t belong.

ii. Jesus knew the importance of a name. He said that He calls His sheep by name: *To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out* (Joh_10:3). In Revelation, we are promised a new name that only God and we know. When we get to heaven, there will be someone there who knows our name.

iii. This may have been the first time Zacchaeus heard someone besides his mother say his name in a kind way. Saying his name made all the difference.

b. **Today I must stay at your house:** Jesus was willing to reach out His hand in friendship to this man who was

universally despised. In the flesh, we can reject outcasts; but Jesus never did.

i. As one commentator says, “His example is our pattern. A Christian church which does not imitate its Master in its frank and continual willingness to associate itself with the degraded and outcast has lost one of the truest signs of its being vitalized with the life of Christ.”

ii. The early church was despised for its acceptance of outcasts (1Co_1:26-31), but the early Christians regarded this as something glorious, not shameful.

c. **Make haste and come down:** Jesus was forward in pursuing friendship with Zacchaeus. He told Him to hurry up and come down, because Jesus invited Himself over for dinner!

i. But who made the first move? In a sense, the both did; Zacchaeus reached out to Jesus by literally “going out on a limb” for Him. Jesus reached out to Zacchaeus by speaking to him.

They both reached out to each other.

3. (Luk_19:7-10) Zacchaeus renounces his sin and Jesus proclaims his salvation.

But when they saw *it*, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.” Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

a. **He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner:** Was Jesus guilty of associating with sinners? Yes and no; Jesus went into be a guest with a man who was a sinner, but He came out from the dinner with a saved man!

b. **Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord:** Seemingly, the dinner took place in between Luk_19:7

and Luk_19:8. It was after time with Jesus that Zacchaeus wanted to get right with God. Often people come to Jesus, and only see things that need to get right after they spend some time with Him.

i. The law required someone who had stolen to restore the amount, plus 20%. Zacchaeus cheerfully offers to do far more than the law demands. Also, to restore to **anyone** he has wronged would be remarkable; "Considering the way he had made his money it was unlikely that this would be a short list." (Morris)

c. **Today salvation has come to this house:** Jesus did not command Zacchaeus to do what He commanded the rich young ruler to do, because Zacchaeus did not *need* to. His giving heart was the way that this rich man could receive salvation.

i. In Luk_18:24-27, Jesus said that it was impossible with man for the rich to enter into heaven; but it is possible with God. This is a fulfillment of that promise. Zacchaeus became a

joyful giver, thus showing God's *impossible* work in him, but the young ruler went away sorry, holding on to his riches.

ii. The priests of Jericho (it was a Levitical city) had probably often condemned Zacchaeus and called on him to give to the poor. But after meeting Jesus, such a sacrifice was done joyfully. Love for Jesus can motivate us for greater things than legalism, guilt, or manipulation can ever do.

d. **The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost:** With this, Jesus explains why He extended friendship to a notorious sinner like Zacchaeus. Jesus came precisely to save people like Zacchaeus.

i. Zacchaeus *really* believed on Jesus. A true **son of Abraham** was not only descended from Abraham genetically, but also had the *faith* in God Abraham had.

B. The parable of the stewards.

1. (Luk_19:11) The purpose of the parable.

Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

a. **He was near Jerusalem:** Jericho is not a great distance from Jerusalem, and as Jesus nears the city, the disciples and others expected Jesus to take control of Israel, and to be the political savior of the nation.

i. Passover was coming soon; according to Josephus, more than two million pilgrims would pour into Jerusalem shortly, and the air would be heavy with the sense that something big might happen.

ii. George Macdonald has a pretty rhyme about their confused expectations:

*They were all looking for a King,
To slay their foes and lift them high.
He came a little baby thing,
That made a woman cry.*

b. **Because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately:** Jesus spoke this parable to give His disciples insight on how they must conduct themselves in

the period of time before He *would* come as a political ruler over this earth.

c. The following parable is rich in historical allusions. “The Saviour probably derived the details of this parable from the actual history of Archelaus, the son of Herod, who after his father’s death went to Rome to receive the sovereignty over part of his father’s kingdom in accordance with the intentions of his father’s testament. Its confirmation by the Roman emperor was necessary, because Herod’s empire in reality formed part of the Roman Empire. A Jewish deputation at that time also went to Rome to dispute Archelaus’s claim to kingship, but the emperor nonetheless appointed him as ruler (though not as a full sovereign king) over half of his father’s kingdom.” (Geldenhuys)

2. (Luk_19:12-13) The master distributes **minas** - units of money.

Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’”

a. **A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return:** This parable is different than the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. Here, ten servants are each given an equal amount of money, and a fair amount of money; a **mina** was worth a hundred days of work for a common laborer.

i. Some gifts are distributed differently by God, according to His own pleasure; others are universally given to believers - such as the gospel, which is given to each Christian in equal measure.

ii. **Delivered to them ten minas:** It isn’t that each servant received **ten minas**, but that **ten** were distributed to the group as a whole, one to each of the ten servants.

b. **Do business till I come:** While the master was away, receiving his kingdom, the servants were expected to **do**

business - to use the resources that the master gave, and to use them to the utmost.

3. (Luk_19:14) The rebellion of the citizens.

“But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this *man* to reign over us.’”

a. **But his citizens hated him:** These are the **citizens** of the nobleman, who lived in the area he ruled.

These are not the servants who received the minas.

i. In this sense, every person is a citizen of God’s earth. We are all under His ultimate rule and have to answer to Him.

b. These citizens **hated him**, and they made it clear to the nobleman **we will not have this man to reign over us**. In Jesus’ parable, the nobleman did nothing to deserve this rejection; it was only because the citizens have heart full of hate.

4. (Luk_19:15-26) Accounting day comes for the servants.

“And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ And he said to him, ‘Well *done*, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’

Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’ Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, *you* wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’ And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give *it* to him

who has ten minas.’ (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.”

a. **Having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him:** First, the master will deal with his servants. He will deal with the rebellious citizens, but they are not his first concern. He first wants to know how faithful his servants have been in his absence.

b. **Then came the first, saying, “Master, your mina has earned ten minas.”** The first servant brought a good report. He did business with his master’s mina, and had ten more to show for it. This was an impressive 1000% increase.

i. The first servant’s praise from his master is beautiful: **Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities** . Because he demonstrated faithful handling of the master’s resources, he was given authority over ten cities in the kingdom his master just received.

ii. **Have authority:** The reward for faithful service is not rest, but *more* service! This is entirely pleasing to the servant of God.

c. **Master, your mina has earned five minas:** The second servant brought another good report. He did business with his master’s mina and had five more to show for it - a 500% increase.

i. He is also rewarded, though not with the words “**Well done, good servant.**” The number of cities he is given authority over is in proportion to his faithfulness in doing business with his master’s resources.

d. **Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief:** The third servant did not have a good report. He did not obey the master’s command to *do business till I come*. Taking the mina and burying it underground is not doing business!

i. He excused his disobedience by claiming that his master was so powerful that he didn't need him to do business with his master's resources (**you collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow**).

e. **Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man:** The master does not reward the third servant. Instead, he rebukes him because the great power of the master should have inspired the servant to greater diligence, not to disobedience and laziness.

i. It would have been easy for this servant to do *something* with his master's resources (**Why then did you not put my money in the bank?**). But out of disobedience, he did not do anything.

ii. This helps us to understand the plan of the master. It was not to make money by his servants, but to make *character* in them. He didn't need them to make money, but they needed to work with him to build their character.

f. **Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas:** The third servant had all taken from him. He remained his master's servant, and in his house, but was left with nothing. He proved himself unable to manage his master's things, and was given nothing to manage.

i. "In the Christian life we do not stand still. We use our gifts and make progress or we lose what we have." (Morris)

g. The main point of this parable is clear; the kingdom will be delayed, so we must concentrate on being faithful servants in the meantime. Our Master has gone away to a far country, and will one-day return with His kingdom. In the meantime, we are commanded to do business with what He has given us until He returns.

i. "By the *ten minas* given to *each*, we may understand the Gospel of the kingdom given to each person who professes to believe in Christ, and which he is to improve to the salvation of his soul. The *same* word is given to all, that all may believe and be saved." (Clarke) ii. When our Master

returns, He will come to reward us according to our faithfulness, and we will be rewarded with different levels of authority in His kingdom.

iii. All His servants will escape the Master's wrath, yet those who have not been faithful with His resources will be saved only by the skin of their teeth.

iv. The unfaithful servants are those who think that because their Master is so mighty, He doesn't need their help. But the issue is not His need of my help; the issue is my need to help Him, my need to be part of His work.

5. (Luk_19:27) Judgment day comes for the master's enemies.

"But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay *them* before me."

a. **But bring here those enemies of mine:** The servants all had to answer for their work in the master's absence, but at least none of them were guilty of treason. Now the master deals with his **enemies**, the rebellious citizens mentioned in Luk_19:14, who *hated him* and said, "*We will not have this man to reign over us.*"

i. **Who did not want me to reign over them:** They could try and deny the reign of the master as much as they pleased, but it would get them nowhere. He would rule over them one way or another.

b. **And slay them before me:** The servants of the master each had to answer to him, but so did his enemies. They met with certain, final judgment.

c. The application is clear: do you want Jesus to reign over you? He will, one way or another. And if you are already His servant, are you doing the business He told you to do?

i. **Slay them before me** seems so severe; we might even think that Jesus compels us to a life or death decision. And indeed He does.

C. Jesus enters Jerusalem.

1. (Luk_19:28) On to Jerusalem.

When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

a. **When He had said this:** After carefully correcting His followers as to the true nature of His kingdom and His mission, Jesus heads steadfastly into Jerusalem.

i. “At last Jerusalem, the temple city in which the greatest and holiest drama on earth will be staged the following week, is in immediate vicinity.” (Geldenhuis)

b. **He went ahead:** Knowing full well what awaited Him, knowing that He must endure the cross before receiving the kingdom, Jesus went. In His suffering, we should *admire*, not *pity* Jesus. He knew exactly what He was getting into.

i. Joh_11:57 makes it clear that there was a price on Jesus’ head, an “all-points-bulletin” was put out for His arrest. Yet, He came into Jerusalem in the most public way possible.

2. (Luk_19:29-34) Careful preparations are made for the entrance ceremony.

And it came to pass, when He came near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, *that* He sent two of His disciples, saying, “Go into the village opposite *you*, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring *it here*. And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing *it*?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’” So those who were sent went their way and found *it* just as He had said to them. But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?” And they said, “The Lord has need of him.”

a. **Go into the village opposite *you*, where as you enter you will find a colt tied:** Jesus now comes to this last, critical week before the crucifixion. He carefully and deliberately sends His disciples to make arrangements for His arrival into Jerusalem. Jesus had been to Jerusalem at least half a dozen times before; but there was something very special about this journey to Jerusalem.

b. **The Lord has need of him:** Jesus would ride this colt into Jerusalem. It was important that it wasn't a horse, because that would send the message that Jesus was a man of war.

i. "The ass was the mount of a man of peace, a merchant or a priest. A king might ride an ass on occasion, but he would be more likely to appear on a mighty war-horse. Zechariah's prophecy saw Messiah as the Prince of peace." (Morris)

3. (Luk_19:35-40) Jesus enters the city to a humble display of praise and honor.

Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. And as He went, *many* spread their clothes on the road. Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying: " 'Blessed *is* the King who comes in the name of the Lord!' Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

a. We like this slice from the life of Jesus because it simply *feels* so right. For much of Jesus' ministry, He was despised and rejected of men, and many of the adoring crowds following Him cared only for what they could *get* from Him, and most His audience rejected any kind of personal commitment to Jesus.

b. But on this day, Jesus was going to be praised. For most of His ministry, Jesus did everything He could to discourage people from publicly celebrating Him as Messiah. But here, Jesus goes out of His way to invite public praise and adoration as Messiah.

i. In fact, when the religious leaders of His day object, He tells them **"I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."**

ii. The idea of creation itself praising God may seem strange, but the Bible speaks about it in a few places - trees, hills, oceans, rivers, mountains, valleys, cattle and creeping things, birds and fields all give praise to God (Psa_148:7-13, Psa_96:11-12).

c. Why did Jesus want to receive such praise? It was not for His sake. It wasn't that Jesus had a self-esteem problem and needed affirmation. Jesus wants to be praised because *we need* to praise Him. God *will* get His praise, and He invites us to be a part of it.

d. They praised Jesus with whatever they had, using simple things like palm branches (Joh_12:13). Jesus does not need great things to give Him honor. You may feel you do not have a great voice, or heart, or life -

but give it to Him, and praise Him with it.

i. They were *all* praising God: **the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice.**

"And yet, I suppose, those disciples had their trials as we have ours. There might have been a sick wife at home, or a child withering with disease." (Spurgeon) Yet they *all* praised Him!

e. **Many spread their clothes on the road:** They honored him with their garments. This meant a lot in time, when most people had only one set of clothes. To lay aside part of their small wardrobe to let a man riding a donkey to go over them was really laying something down.

f. **Voice for all the mighty works they had seen:** Their praise was filled with remembrance. They remembered all the mighty works they saw Jesus do such as the raising of Lazarus from the dead (Joh_12:17-18). They told of the great things God had done in their life.

i. A great indictment against much of our praise is that it is mindless. We do not have anything specific in our minds that we praise God for, things that we have seen Him do in our lives.

ii. Think of loving words between a husband and wife - we always long to hear that our spouse loves us, but sometimes we ask "why?" because we want to know if they are just saying words or if they are really thinking of how they love us. Anyone who says "Praise the Lord!" should be able to answer one question: "Praise Him for *what?*" And they should have a good answer.

g. **Teacher, rebuke Your disciples:** Their praise made Jesus' enemies uncomfortable; it made them object to the praise being offered. There is something about the true worship of God that often makes people feel uncomfortable, especially people who aren't Christians yet.

i. Often times, a newcomer who wants Jesus will think worship is a little strange; but someone who is hostile might be absolutely offended by the worship.

ii. It made them know they were being defeated. Joh_12:19 says that on this day, *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!"*

iii. Nothing tells Satan and his followers "you've lost" like the praises of God ringing in their ears. Satan has lost because when God's people are really worshipping, their hearts and minds are on Him.

4. (Luk_19:41-44) Jesus weeps over Jerusalem.

Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

a. **As He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it:** "*Wept* might be rendered 'wailed'; Jesus burst into sobbing as he lamented lost opportunity." (Morris)

i. It is the eleventh hour for the Jewish nation - their leaders have rejected Jesus, and most of the masses have followed their leaders. But there is still time, if they will only take advantage of the opportunity in front of them.

ii. In some old copies of the Bible, they removed the passage about Jesus weeping here, because they thought that if Jesus were perfect, He would not weep. But the perfection of Jesus demands that He weep at this occasion, when Israel rejected Him - their only opportunity for salvation.

iii. Jesus shows us the heart of God, how even when judgment must be pronounced, it is never done with glee. There is weeping in the heart of God even when His judgment is perfectly just and righteous.

b. **If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!** He mourns over the fact they did not know the time of the Messiah's coming, that day prophesied by Daniel: **this your day**.

d. Why was **this your day** so important? Because this was *the day* prophesied by Daniel that *Messiah the Prince* would come unto Jerusalem. Daniel said that it would be 483 years on the Jewish calendar from the day of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the day the Messiah would come to Jerusalem - and it was 483 years, by the Jewish reckoning of 360

day years, exactly to the day (Dan_9:25).

i. This is the day mentioned in Psa_118:24 : *This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

c. **The things that make for your peace:** The name *Jerusalem* means "city of peace"; but the city of peace did not know the **things that make for your peace**. Jesus knew that their desire for a political Messiah would bring total destruction in less than a generation.

i. **Days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you:** The historian Josephus describes in detail the **embankment around**

Jerusalem; how it utterly shut up the city before the Romans totally destroyed them (*Wars of the Jews*, 5.12.1-3).

ii. From Josephus: "All hope of escaping was now cut off from the Jews, together with their liberty of going out of the city. Then did the famine widen its progress, and devour the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms of women and infants that were dying by famine, and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged; the children also, and the young men wandered about the market places like shadows, all swelled with the famine, and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them. For a time the dead were buried; but afterwards, when they could not do that, they had them cast down from the wall into the valleys beneath. When Titus, on going his rounds along these valleys, saw them full of dead bodies, and the thick putrefication running about them, he gave a groan, and spreading out his hands to heave, called God to witness this was not his doing." (Cited in Spurgeon. He adds: "There is nothing in history to exceed this horror. But even this is nothing compared with the destruction of a soul.")

5. (Luk_19:45-48) The cleansing of the temple.

Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him, and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.

a. **He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it:** What was the problem? Profiteers, in cooperation with the priests, robbed visitors to the temple by forcing them to purchase "approved" sacrificial animals and currencies at inflated prices.

i. Every Jewish male had to pay a yearly temple tax - an amount equaling about two days pay.

It had to be paid in the currency of the temple, and the money exchangers would change your money for the temple money, and they did it at outrageous rates.

ii. As well, they did this in the outer courts of the temple, the only area where Gentiles could come and pray. Therefore, this place of prayer was made into a swap meet, and a dishonest one at that! Their corruption of the court of gentiles defeated one of the purposes of the temple - to be a **house of prayer** for all nations.

b. We do love Jesus; and we want to praise Him; yet we must also allow His cleansing presence in our lives.

If He wants to turn over some tables in our hearts, so be it.

(Luk 19:2) Now³ a man named Zacchaeus was there; he was a chief tax collector⁴ and was rich.

(Luk 19:3) He⁵ was trying to get a look at Jesus,⁶ but being a short man he could not see over the crowd.⁷

(Luk 19:4) So⁸ he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree⁹ to see him, because Jesus¹⁰ was going to pass that way.

(Luk 19:5) And when Jesus came to that place, he looked up¹¹ and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly,¹² because I must¹³ stay at your house today."¹⁴

(Luk 19:6) So he came down quickly¹⁵ and welcomed Jesus¹⁶ joyfully.¹⁷

(Luk 19:7) And when the people¹⁸ saw it, they all complained,¹⁹ "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."²⁰

(Luk 19:8) But Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, half of my possessions I now give²¹ to the poor, and if²² I have cheated anyone of anything, I am paying back four times as much!"

(Luk 19:9) Then²³ Jesus said to him, "Today salvation²⁴ has come to this household,²⁵ because he too is a son of Abraham!²⁶

(Luk 19:10) For the Son of Man came²⁷ to seek and to save the lost."

(Luk 19:11) ***The Parable of the Ten Minas***

While the people were listening to these things, Jesus²⁸ proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem,²⁹ and because they thought³⁰ that the kingdom of God³¹ was going to³² appear immediately.

(Luk 19:12) Therefore he said, "A nobleman³³ went to a distant country to receive³⁴ for himself a kingdom and then return.³⁵

(Luk 19:13) And he summoned ten of his slaves,³⁶ gave them ten minas,³⁷ and said to them, 'Do business with these until I come back.'

(Luk 19:14) But his citizens³⁸ hated³⁹ him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man⁴⁰ to be king⁴¹ over us!'

(Luk 19:15) When⁴² he returned after receiving the kingdom, he summoned⁴³ these slaves to whom he had given the money. He wanted⁴⁴ to know how much they had earned⁴⁵ by trading.

(Luk 19:16) So⁴⁶ the first one came before him and said, 'Sir,⁴⁷ your mina⁴⁸ has made ten minas more.'

(Luk 19:17) And the king⁴⁹ said to him, 'Well done, good slave! Because you have been faithful⁵⁰ in a very small matter, you will have authority⁵¹ over ten cities.'

(Luk 19:18) Then⁵² the second one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has made five minas.'

(Luk 19:19) So⁵³ the king⁵⁴ said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'

(Luk 19:20) Then another⁵⁵ slave⁵⁶ came and said, 'Sir, here is⁵⁷ your mina that I put away for safekeeping⁵⁸ in a piece of cloth.⁵⁹

(Luk 19:21) For I was afraid of you, because you are a severe⁶⁰ man. You withdraw⁶¹ what you did not deposit⁶² and reap what you did not sow.'

(Luk 19:22) The king⁶³ said to him, 'I will judge you by your own words,⁶⁴ you wicked slave!⁶⁵ So you knew, did you,

that I was a severe⁶⁶ man, withdrawing what I didn't deposit and reaping what I didn't sow?

(Luk 19:23) Why then didn't you put⁶⁷ my money in the bank,⁶⁸ so that when I returned I could have collected it with interest?'

(Luk 19:24) And he said to his attendants,⁶⁹ 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has ten.'⁷⁰

(Luk 19:25) But⁷¹ they said to him, 'Sir, he has ten minas already!'⁷²

(Luk 19:26) 'I tell you that everyone who has will be given more,⁷³ but from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.⁷⁴

(Luk 19:27) But as for these enemies of mine who did not want me to be their king,⁷⁵ bring them here and slaughter⁷⁶ them⁷⁷ in front of me!' "

(Luk 19:28) ***The Triumphal Entry***

After Jesus⁷⁸ had said this, he continued on ahead,⁷⁹ going up to Jerusalem.⁸⁰

(Luk 19:29) Now⁸¹ when he approached Bethphage⁸² and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives,⁸³ he sent two of the disciples,

(Luk 19:30) telling them,⁸⁴ "Go to the village ahead of you.⁸⁵ When⁸⁶ you enter it, you will find a colt tied there that has never been ridden.⁸⁷ Untie it and bring it here.

(Luk 19:31) If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say, 'The Lord needs⁸⁸ it.' "

(Luk 19:32) So those who were sent ahead found⁸⁹ it exactly⁹⁰ as he had told them.

(Luk 19:33) As⁹¹ they were untying the colt, its owners asked them,⁹² "Why are you untying that colt?"

(Luk 19:34) They replied, "The Lord needs it."

(Luk 19:35) Then⁹³ they brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks⁹⁴ on the colt,⁹⁵ and had Jesus get on⁹⁶ it.

(Luk 19:36) As⁹⁷ he rode along, they⁹⁸ spread their cloaks on the road.

(Luk 19:37) As he approached the road leading down from⁹⁹ the Mount of Olives,¹⁰⁰ the whole crowd of his¹⁰¹ disciples began to rejoice¹⁰² and praise¹⁰³ God with a loud voice for all the mighty works¹⁰⁴ they had seen:¹⁰⁵

(Luk 19:38) " **Blessed is the king** ¹⁰⁶ **who comes in the name of the Lord!** ¹⁰⁷ Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

(Luk 19:39) But¹⁰⁸ some of the Pharisees¹⁰⁹ in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples."¹¹⁰

(Luk 19:40) He answered,¹¹¹ "I tell you, if they¹¹² keep silent, the very stones¹¹³ will cry out!"

(Luk 19:41) ***Jesus Weeps for Jerusalem under Judgment***

Now¹¹⁴ when Jesus¹¹⁵ approached¹¹⁶ and saw the city, he wept over it,

(Luk 19:42) saying, "If you had only known on this day,¹¹⁷ even you, the things that make for peace!¹¹⁸ But now they are hidden¹¹⁹ from your eyes.

(Luk 19:43) For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build¹²⁰ an embankment¹²¹ against you and surround you and close in on you from every side.

(Luk 19:44) They will demolish you¹²² — you and your children within your walls¹²³ — and they will not leave within you one stone¹²⁴

on top of another,¹²⁵ because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God."¹²⁶

(Luk 19:45) ***Cleansing the Temple***

Then¹²⁷ Jesus¹²⁸ entered the temple courts¹²⁹ and began to drive out those who were selling things there,¹³⁰

(Luk 19:46) saying to them, "It is written, ' **My house will be a house of prayer,**'¹³¹ but you have turned it into **a den** ¹³² **of robbers** !" ¹³³

(Luk 19:47) Jesus¹³⁴ was teaching daily in the temple courts. The chief priests and the experts in the law¹³⁵ and

the prominent leaders among the people were seeking to assassinate¹³⁶ him, (Luk 19:48) but¹³⁷ they could not find a way to do it,¹³⁸ for all the people hung on his words.¹³⁹ (Luk 20:1) ***The Authority of Jesus***

Now one¹ day, as Jesus² was teaching the people in the temple courts³ and proclaiming⁴ the gospel, the chief priests and the experts in the law⁵ with the elders came up⁶ (Guzik)

Luk 20:1-47

Luke 20 - QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH JESUS

A. By what authority?

1. (Luk_20:1-2) The religious and political leaders question Jesus.

Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, *that* the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted *Him* and spoke to Him, saying, “Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?”

a. **The chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him:** Jesus didn’t look for these great debates with the religious leaders. He wanted to teach the people and tell them about God’s good news. But the questioners came to Him, and He was more than able to handle them.

b. **Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things?** Jesus showed great courage by boldly entering Jerusalem and driving out the corrupt merchants from the temple courts. Now the religious leaders want to know what right He thinks He has to do such things.

2. (Luk_20:3-8) Jesus answers their question with another question.

But He answered and said to them, “I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: The baptism of John; was it from heaven or from men?” And they reasoned among

themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet." So they answered that they did not know where *it was* from. And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

a. **The baptism of John; was it from heaven or from men?** By replying with this question, Jesus wasn't *evading* the question of the religious leaders. Instead, He uses the question to explain who He is and to expose the hypocrisy of the leaders. If John was from God, then he was right in proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah - and if this is true, then Jesus had all authority.

b. **They answered that they did not know where it was from:** This response shows they were not sincere seekers of truth. They cared more about winning points in an argument than in knowing the truth.

i. "If you do not recognize authority when you see it, He said in effect, no amount of arguing will convince you of it." (Geldenhuys)

c. If we want answers from Jesus, we must deal rightly with the truth that has already been revealed. These men knew that John said Jesus was the Messiah, and were not willing to accept it.

B. The parable of the tenant farmers.

1. (Luk_20:9-16 a) A parable about a landowner and his tenants.

Then He began to tell the people this parable: "A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed. Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty-handed. And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast *him* out.

Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son.

Probably they will respect *him* when they see him.' But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed *him*. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others."

a. **A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers:** This sort of tenant farming relationship was a common practice in Jesus' day, especially in Galilee. Archaeologists have discovered records of this same sort of dispute between landowners and tenant farmers.

i. "In a day when title was sometimes uncertain, anyone who had had the use of land for three years was presumed to own it in the absence of an alternative claim." (Morris)

b. Jesus spoke to a Jewish audience, who would know that the **vineyard** is used in the Old Testament as a picture of Israel (Isa_5:1-7). In this parable, the tenants (the **vinedressers**) represented the religious leader the Jewish people.

c. The **vinedressers** didn't buy the vineyard, nor did they make it. They were allowed to work it by a generous owner - yet they turned against the owner, and one day would answer for it.

i. This parable tells us that God, the owner of all, is more patient with rebels than we would ever be, but that there is a final day of reckoning.

d. **This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours:** This shows the foolishness of fallen man, thinking that if they kill the Son, they can take the owner's inheritance!

e. This parable tells us that Jesus knew He was the Son - the Son of God - and that He knew that He would be killed soon.

2. (Luk_20:16-19) Jesus applies the parable.

And when they heard *it* they said, “Certainly not!” Then He looked at them and said, “What then is this that is written: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone’? Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.” And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people; for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.

a. **The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone:** Jesus instructs them from the “Hosanna Psalm” (Psa_118:22-28), because the Messiah has been officially presented to Israel at the Triumphal Entry. The hostility of the Jewish leaders shows that this Messianic **stone** is being **rejected**, even if He was initially greeted with hosannas.

b. **Stone . . . chief cornerstone:** Jesus is often likened unto a stone or a rock in the Bible. He is the rock of provision that followed Israel in the desert (1Co_10:4). He is the stone of stumbling (1Pe_2:8). He is the stone cut without hands that crushes the kingdoms of this world (Dan_2:45).

c. **Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder:** Anyone who comes to Jesus will be **broken** of their pride and self-will, but those who refuse to come will be crushed by Christ in judgment.

C. God and Caesar.

1. (Luk_20:20-22) The Pharisees try to entrap Jesus.

So they watched *Him*, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor. Then they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth: “Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

a. **That they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the**

governor: Public opinion had kept them from laying hold of Jesus. Now the enemies of Jesus try to turn the tide of public opinion against Him by making Jesus appear to side with the Roman government.

b. Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?

Since 6 a.d. the Jews were forced to pay taxes directly into the emperor's treasury. Some Jewish patriots (such as the Zealots) refused, not wanting to recognize Roman rule as legitimate. Most others grudgingly paid it.

c. This seemed to put Jesus on the horns of a dilemma. If He agreed the tax should be paid, He seems to deny the sovereignty of God over Israel, and will lose popular support. If He says that it should not be paid, He declares Himself an enemy of Rome, which branded Him as a revolutionary and put His life in danger.

2. (Luk_20:23-26) Jesus answers their question.

But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me? Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?" They answered and said, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent.

a. Whose image and inscription does it have?

Essentially, Jesus said "You recognize Caesar's civil authority when you use his coins, therefore you are obliged to pay him the taxes he asks for."

i. As Jesus holds the coin, it lay on the very hand that would soon be pierced by the government of Caesar. Jesus understood this very well.

b. Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's: Because we take advantage of the benefits of government, we are obliged to submit to government, as long as it does not infringe on our service to God.

i. "Jesus is saying that we are citizens of heaven and earth at the same time." (Morris) c. **And to God the things that are God's**: Had the Jews rendered God His due, they would have never had to render Caesar anything. The fact that they were under Roman domination was due to their own departure from the Lord. The blessings and curses of the Mosaic Law said that an obedient Israel would be a free Israel.

d. Just as it is important to **render therefore to Caesar**, we must also render **to God the things that are God's**. The coin belonged to Caesar because his image was stamped on it. We should give ourselves to God because His image is stamped on us.

i. Give the coin to Caesar, but give your life to God. It may be fitting to *die* for your country, but only God is worth *living* for.

ii. Jesus' answer tells us that Caesar does not have all authority. There are things that should be rendered to God alone. When the State treads on this ground that belongs to God, we are duty-bound to obey God before the State.

e. It doesn't matter how good an answer you give, wicked people will still pervert your good words - as they did to Jesus. In Luk_23:2, they accused Jesus of *forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar* - when He actually said just the opposite!

D. A question about the resurrection.

1. (Luk_20:27-33) The Sadducees ask Jesus a ridiculous question.

Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to *Him* and asked Him, saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us *that* if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her as wife, and he died childless. Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died

also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife.”

a. The **Sadducees** were well educated, sophisticated, influential and wealthy. They did not believe in immortality, spirits or angels.

i. Morris on the Sadducees: “They were the conservative, aristocratic, high-priestly party, worldly minded and very ready to cooperate with the Romans, which, of course, enabled them to maintain their privileged position.”

b. **Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become?** Their question is absurd; it is similar to asking, “how many angels can dance on the head of a pin?” or “did Adam have a belly-button?” An absurd question isn’t valid just because it is directed to God.

2. (Luk_20:34-36) Jesus corrects their misunderstanding of resurrection life by showing it is life of an entirely different order.

And Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

a. **Neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore:** The Sadducees thought that if there was a such thing as resurrection, it was just this same life lived forever. But in the age to come, our lives will be lived on a completely different principle, in a dimension that we can’t imagine.

b. We can’t take our present relationships and just figure they will be the same in heaven. On earth, human relationships are largely a matter of time and place (a man can be a son, then an adult, then a husband, then a father, and so on); but in heaven, all that changes.

i. We know it won’t be the same as what we know on earth, but we can’t say for sure what it will all be like in heaven -

other than to know that we won't be disappointed.

3. (Luk_20:37-40) Jesus proves the resurrection from the Scriptures.

"But even Moses showed in the *burning bush passage* that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him."

Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." But after that they dared not question Him anymore.

a. **He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him:** If Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did not continue to live, God would not say that He *is* their God, speaking in the present tense. He would have to say that He *was* their God.

E. Using a question, Jesus warns the religious leaders.

1. (Luk_20:41-44) Jesus asks a question: how can the Messiah be both the **Son of David** and the **Lord** of David?

And He said to them, "How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool."' Therefore David calls Him 'Lord'; how is He then his Son?"

a. **How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David?** When the scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees questioned Jesus, they tried to make Him look bad or trap Him. Jesus didn't do the same with His questions to them. Instead, He got to the heart of the matter: "do you really know who I am?"

i. Jesus tested their notion that they already knew all about the Messiah. He asked them to consider that they may not know everything about the Messiah, and may have something to learn.

b. **Therefore David calls Him 'Lord'; how is He then his Son?** Jesus is not only the **Son of David** (a popular

Messianic title) He is also the **Lord** of David. As Rev_22:16 says, He is *both the root and offspring of David*.

2. (Luk_20:45-47) Jesus warns about the hypocrisy of the scribes.

Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, "Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

a. **Who desire to go around in long robes:** The scribes were men of leisure, who watched while others worked. **Love greetings:** They demanded recognition from others for their standing with God. **The best seats:** They demand the "perks" of status and privilege.

b. **Devour widows' houses:** In that day, a Jewish teacher could not be paid for teaching - but he could receive gifts. Apparently, many scribes used flattery and manipulation to get big gifts from those who could least afford to give them - such as widows.

i. The Jews of Jesus' day taught that teachers were to be respected almost as God; they said that they deserved more honor and respect than any other people in life did. They taught that the greatest act someone could do is give money to a teacher. Of course, it was the teachers themselves who taught this!

c. **For a pretense make long prayers:** The scribes thought they were more spiritual because of their **long prayers**. But Morgan rightly said that when a man is away from his wife, and the journey is short, the letters are short - but the farther he is from his wife, the longer the letters become. Morgan said that some people must be a long way from God because their prayers are so long!

d. **These will receive greater condemnation:** The scribes represent a complete contrast to the picture of how a disciple should live - as a servant, as a child, as one carrying

a cross. Jesus said we should notice what they do, as well as what they say - and especially that we should notice their *destiny*.

e. The scribes were experts at projecting a religious image, but a religious image before man isn't enough.

Are you really a servant of Jesus Christ, or are you more like one of these scribes?

(Luk 20:2) and said to him,⁷ "Tell us: By what authority⁸ are you doing these things?⁹ Or who it is who gave you this authority?"

(Luk 20:3) He answered them,¹⁰ "I will also ask you a question, and you tell me:

(Luk 20:4) John's baptism¹¹ — was it from heaven or from people?"¹²

(Luk 20:5) So¹³ they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?'

(Luk 20:6) But if we say, 'From people,' all the people will stone us, because they are convinced that John was a prophet."

(Luk 20:7) So¹⁴ they replied that they did not know¹⁵ where it came from.

(Luk 20:8) Then¹⁶ Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you¹⁷ by whose authority¹⁸ I do these things."

(Luk 20:9) ***The Parable of the Tenants***

Then¹⁹ he began to tell the people this parable: "A man²⁰ planted a vineyard,²¹ leased it to tenant farmers,²² and went on a journey for a long time.

(Luk 20:10) When harvest time came, he sent a slave²³ to the tenants so that they would give²⁴ him his portion of the crop.²⁵ However, the tenants beat his slave²⁶ and sent him away empty-handed.

(Luk 20:11) So²⁷ he sent another slave. They beat this one too, treated him outrageously, and sent him away empty-handed.²⁸

(Luk 20:12) So²⁹ he sent still a third. They even wounded this one, and threw him out.

(Luk 20:13) Then³⁰ the owner of the vineyard said, 'What should I do? I will send my one dear son;³¹ perhaps they will respect him.'

(Luk 20:14) But when the tenants saw him, they said to one another, 'This is the heir; let's kill him so the inheritance will be ours!'

(Luk 20:15) So³² they threw him out of the vineyard and killed³³ him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?

(Luk 20:16) He will come and destroy³⁴ those tenants and give the vineyard to others."³⁵ When the people³⁶ heard this, they said, "May this never happen!"³⁷

(Luk 20:17) But Jesus³⁸ looked straight at them and said, "Then what is the meaning of that which is written: ' ***The stone the builders***

rejected has become the cornerstone'?³⁹

(Luk 20:18) Everyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces,⁴⁰ and the one on whom it falls will be crushed."⁴¹

(Luk 20:19) Then⁴² the experts in the law⁴³ and the chief priests wanted to arrest⁴⁴ him that very hour, because they realized he had told this parable against them. But⁴⁵ they were afraid of the people.

(Luk 20:20) ***Paying Taxes to Caesar***

Then⁴⁶ they watched him carefully and sent spies who pretended to be sincere.⁴⁷ They wanted to take advantage of what he might say⁴⁸ so that they could deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction⁴⁹ of the governor.

(Luk 20:21) Thus⁵⁰ they asked him, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach correctly,⁵¹ and show no partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.⁵²

(Luk 20:22) Is it right⁵³ for us to pay the tribute tax⁵⁴ to Caesar⁵⁵ or not?"

(Luk 20:23) But Jesus⁵⁶ perceived their deceit⁵⁷ and said to them,

(Luk 20:24) "Show me a denarius.⁵⁸ Whose image⁵⁹ and inscription are on it?"⁶⁰ They said, "Caesar's."

(Luk 20:25) So⁶¹ he said to them, "Then give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."⁶²

(Luk 20:26) Thus⁶³ they were unable in the presence of the people to trap⁶⁴ him with his own words.⁶⁵ And stunned⁶⁶ by his answer, they fell silent.

(Luk 20:27) ***Marriage and the Resurrection***

Now some Sadducees⁶⁷ (who contend that there is no resurrection)⁶⁸ came to him.

(Luk 20:28) They asked him,⁶⁹ "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that ***if a man's brother dies leaving*** a wife but ***no children, that***

man ⁷⁰***must marry*** ⁷¹***the widow and father children*** ⁷²***for his brother.***⁷³

(Luk 20:29) Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman⁷⁴ and died without children.

(Luk 20:30) The second⁷⁵

(Luk 20:31) and then the third married her, and in this same way all seven died, leaving no children.

(Luk 20:32) Finally the woman died too.

(Luk 20:33) In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be?⁷⁶ For all seven had married her."⁷⁷

(Luk 20:34) So⁷⁸ Jesus said to them, "The people of this age⁷⁹ marry and are given in marriage.

(Luk 20:35) But those who are regarded as worthy to share in⁸⁰ that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage.⁸¹

(Luk 20:36) In fact, they can no longer die, because they are equal to angels⁸² and are sons of God, since they are⁸³ sons⁸⁴ of the resurrection.

(Luk 20:37) But even Moses revealed that the dead are raised⁸⁵ in the passage about the bush,⁸⁶ where he calls the Lord ***the God of***

Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.⁸⁷

(Luk 20:38) Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living,⁸⁸ for all live before him."⁸⁹

(Luk 20:39) Then⁹⁰ some of the experts in the law⁹¹ answered, "Teacher, you have spoken well!"⁹²

(Luk 20:40) For they did not dare any longer to ask⁹³ him anything.

(Luk 20:41) ***The Messiah: David's Son and Lord***

But⁹⁴ he said to them, "How is it that they say that the Christ⁹⁵ is David's son?⁹⁶

(Luk 20:42) For David himself says in the book of Psalms,

' The Lord said to my⁹⁷ ***lord,***

" Sit at my right hand,

(Luk 20:43) ***until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.*** " '⁹⁸

(Luk 20:44) If David then calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?"⁹⁹

(Luk 20:45) ***Jesus Warns the Disciples against Pride***

As¹⁰⁰ all the people were listening, Jesus¹⁰¹ said to his disciples,

(Luk 20:46) "Beware¹⁰² of the experts in the law.¹⁰³ They¹⁰⁴ like walking around in long robes, and they love elaborate greetings¹⁰⁵ in the marketplaces and the best seats¹⁰⁶ in the synagogues¹⁰⁷ and the places of honor at banquets.

(Luk 20:47) They¹⁰⁸ devour¹⁰⁹ widows' property,¹¹⁰ and as a show make long prayers. They will receive a more severe punishment."

(Luk 21:1) ***The Widow's Offering***

Jesus¹ looked up² and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box.³

(Guzik)

Luk 21:1-38

Luke 21 - JESUS WARNS OF JERUSALEM'S FALL AND HIS RETURN

A. A widow's sacrificial gift.

1. (Luk_21:1-2) Jesus observes the widow's giving.

And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites.

a. **He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites:** This poor widow must have been a welcome sight to a weary Jesus, who endured a storm of questions from His enemies.

i. Jesus looks at us when we give. He notices how much we give, but is far more interested in what that amount says about our hearts than anything else.

b. **Two mites:** According to Poole's calculations, the value of a mite can be determined like this: a denarii is one day's wage, and equals six meahs; one meah equals two pondions; one pondion equals two issarines; one issarine equals eight mites. When you figure it all out, two mites is 1% of a denarii - 1% of a day's wage.

c. She gave **two mites**, not just one. The widow might have kept one coin for herself, and who would blame her if she did? Giving one meant giving half of all her money. But in giving **two mites**, her giving has a certain recklessness about it.

2. (Luk_21:3-4) Jesus assesses the widow's gift.

So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

a. **This poor widow has put in more than all:** Jesus did not say that she put in more than *any one* of them. He said that she put in **more than all** of them - all of them put together! How could it possibly be said that she **put in more than all**? Because all the others gave out of **their abundance**; she gave sacrificially, **out of her poverty**.

b. This means that the poor man can serve and please God just as much as a rich man. It doesn't matter if you are poor in influence, in gifts, or in money; if you sacrificially give to God what you have, He sees it and is pleased.

c. Jesus had just criticized the scribes as those *who devour widow's houses* (Luk_20:47). Now a lone widow makes a spectacular contribution - had her house been devoured by a scribe?

3. What, in God's eyes, determines the value of a gift?

a. Remember that God does not *need* our money - it is *our* privilege to give to Him; giving is necessary for our sake, not for God's sake.

b. A gift's value is determined by the *spirit* in which it is given. God doesn't want grudgingly given money, or guilt money - God loves the cheerful giver.

c. The value of a gift is determined by what it *cost* the giver; this is what made the widow's gift so valuable.

David refused to give God *that which cost me nothing* (2Sa_24:24).

B. Jesus speaks of future events.

1. (Luk_21:5-6) Jesus makes an amazing prediction concerning the temple.

Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, "These things which you see; the days will come in which not *one* stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down."

a. **As some spoke of the temple:** This temple was originally rebuilt by Zerubbabel and Ezra (Ezr_6:15), but greatly expanded and improved by Herod. It was the center of Jewish life for almost a thousand years -

so much so, that it was customary to swear by the temple (Mat_23:16), and speaking against the temple could be considered blasphemy (Act_6:13).

i. After Herod, the temple was huge - nearly 500 yards long and 400 yards wide. Herod's rebuilding work started in 19 b.c., and was only completed in 63 a.d., taking more than eighty years. It was finished only seven years before it was destroyed.

b. **How it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations:** The temple wasn't just big, it was also beautiful. The Jewish historian Josephus says that the temple was covered on the outside with gold plates, that were so brilliant that when the sun shone on them, it was blinding to look at. Where there was no gold, there were blocks of marble of such a pure white that strangers, from a distance, thought there was snow on the temple.

i. As great as the temple was, Jesus never hesitated to claim that He was greater than the temple (Mat_12:5). For many Jews of that day, the temple had become an idol - it subtly began to mean more to the people than God Himself did. God has a habit of destroying our idols.

ii. Good things can become the worst idols; and sometimes God sours even good things that we have allowed to become our idols

c. **Not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down:** Some 40 years after Jesus said this, there was a widespread Jewish revolution against the Romans in Palestine, and they enjoyed many early successes. But ultimately, Rome crushed the rebels; Jerusalem was leveled, including the temple - just as Jesus said.

i. It is said that at the fall of Jerusalem, the last surviving Jews of the city fled to the temple, because it was the strongest, most secure building in the city. Roman soldiers surrounded it, and one drunken soldier started a fire that soon engulfed the whole building. Ornate gold detail work in the roof melted down in the cracks between the stone walls of the temple, and to retrieve the gold, the Roman commander ordered that the temple be dismantled stone by stone. The destruction was so complete that today, they have true difficulty learning exactly where the temple was.

2. (Luk_21:7) His listeners ask about the events connected with the temple's destruction.

So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things are about to take place?"

a. **Teacher, but when will these things be?** Jesus will tell them about the fate of the temple, but also about the fate of the whole world.

b. "Most divines think that God in the destruction of Jerusalem intended to give a specimen of the general conflagration, and ruin of the world at the last day; so as the signs of the same kind with those seen before Jerusalem was destroyed, shall be seen before the great and terrible day of our Lord's coming to judge the world." (Poole)

3. (Luk_21:8) To walk in these dangerous times, do not follow false leaders.

And He said: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am *He*,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them."

a. **For many will come in My name:** Jesus knew that many would arise more than willing to assume the role of political messiah for Israel. One striking example of this was a man named Bar Kokhba, who 100

years after Jesus was considered by many Jews to be the Messiah. He started a widespread revolution against the Romans and enjoyed early success, but was soon crushed.

b. **Therefore do not go after them:** These people who rejected Jesus when He came to them as Messiah ended up falling for false messiahs who led them into nothing but death and destruction. If we don't stand on the truth, we may fall for anything.

4. (Luk_21:9-11) To walk in these dangerous times, do not be frightened by catastrophes commonly associated with the end times.

"But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end *will not come* immediately." Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven."

a. **When you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified:** All these things preceded the destruction of Jerusalem. Were there **wars**? The Romans were frequently at war with the Jews, the Samaritans, the Syrians, and others during this period. Were there **earthquakes**? Historians tell us of great earthquakes in the Roman Empire before Jerusalem was destroyed. Were there **famines**? Act_11:28 tells of one in this period. Were there **fearful sights**? Pompeii blew its top just seven years before Jerusalem was destroyed. Were there **signs in the heavens**? Not long before Jerusalem was destroyed, a comet that looked like a sword hung over the city by night for a year.

b. Yet, Jesus also speaks of general conditions that will precede His second coming. The world has seen incredible catastrophe since the time of Jesus. Even in our century we have seen genocide on an unimaginable scale, world wide war, and whole continents given over to disease and famine; yet these things in themselves are not *the* signs of Jesus' coming.

5. (Luk_21:12-15) To walk in these dangerous times, do not worry about your legal defense when you are persecuted

and face charges because of your Christian witness.

“But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. Therefore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.”

a. **You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake:** Our greatest occasions for testimony come when we are “on trial” before others, either in a formal or an informal sense. We can trust Jesus that He will do as He promised: **give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.**

6. (Luk_21:16-19) To walk in these dangerous times, when all others turn against you, persevere and take a firm stand.

“You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put *some* of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But not a hair of your head shall be lost. By your patience possess your souls.”

a. **By your patience possess your souls:** The word for **patience** here is the great Greek word *hupomone*. It speaks of a strong endurance, not a passive waiting. Our **souls** will be kept by the strong endurance that the Lord works into us.

7. (Luk_21:20-24 a) To walk in these dangerous times, flee Jerusalem when armies begin to surround it.

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon

this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations.”

a. **But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies:**

Most Jews expected the Messiah to return in glory when hostile Gentile armies surrounded Jerusalem. When the Romans circled the city in 70 a.d., there was a sense of rejoicing among many of the Jews.

b. **Let those who are in Judea:** However, Christians in Jerusalem knew what Jesus had said and they obeyed Him, fleeing across the Jordan River to a city named Pella. No Christians perished in the fall of Jerusalem.

c. **For these are the days of vengeance:** But 1.1 million Jews were killed; and another 97,000 were taken captive in one of the worst calamities ever to strike the Jewish people. Jesus warned them to avoid it.

i. When the Romans were done with Jerusalem in 70 a.d., not a single Jew was left alive in the city. The Romans eventually renamed the city *Aelia Capitolina*, and for many years would not allow a Jew to even enter what was formerly known as Jerusalem, except on one day a year - the anniversary of the fall of the city and the destruction of the temple, when Jews were invited to come and mourn bitterly.

ii. Truly Jesus meant it when He said **these are the days of vengeance**. This is why He wept over Jerusalem in 19:41-44, because He could see the massive devastation that was coming upon this city He loved - and why He warned all who would listen how they could flee from the coming destruction.

8. (Luk_21:24 b) Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are over.

“And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

a. **Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles:** The Israelis took possession of Jerusalem in 1968, but the holy mount is still Arab property, under Arab rule. As far as God is concerned, the most important piece of real estate in

Jerusalem - and prophetically speaking, the most important in the world - is still **trampled by Gentiles**.

b. **Until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled**: What happens when the **times of the Gentiles** are over? Then, His particular dealings with Israel begin again, and the last seven-year period of Daniel 9

begins. The calamities described in following verses will come in this period.

9. (Luk_21:25-28) When the final period of calamity hits the world, look up - your redemption is on the way.

“And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”

a. **Signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity**: This kind of total chaos and calamity is described in horrific detail in Revelation 6, 8-9, , 15-18.

All this will culminate in the dramatic, spectacular return of Jesus, coming with His church to this earth.

b. **Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near**: The things that will **begin to happen** are described in Luk_21:25-27. Jesus assures believers who are on the earth at that time to be ready, because the time of great tribulation they are experiencing will not last forever, but Jesus will return in glory soon.

10. (Luk_21:29-33) When you see these signs (spoken of in Luk_21:25-26), you know that the end is very near.

Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and

know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

a. **Look at the fig tree:** The fig tree is just one example of a tree that buds before summer; no special reference to Israel seems to be intended (**and all the trees**). The idea is that when a fig tree buds, there is an inevitable result - summer is near, and fruit is coming. In the same way, when these signs are seen, the coming of Jesus in glory, with His church, to this world will inevitably follow.

i. The generation that sees those signs will also see the very end. God will not prolong the Great Tribulation forever.

b. **Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away:** No mere man could truthfully say this. Jesus claims that His words are the very words of God - and they are.

11. (Luk_21:34-38) How to live in the last days.

"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.

a. We must **take heed** because there are certain things that will make one unprepared - **carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life**. Each of these things can make us unprepared for the day of Jesus' return.

i. **Carousing** literally refers to the hangover that comes after a time of intoxication.

b. **Watch therefore:** We must **watch**. Anyone who watches will never be caught in a **snare** - our failure to watch keeps us from being ready.

c. We must **pray always**, that we may be found worthy to **escape all these things that will come to pass**. The good news in Jesus is that we don't have to go through this calamity that is coming. He will take as many as are ready before this calamity begins.

i. Regarding the destruction of Jerusalem, those who listened to and obeyed Jesus escaped the horrible destruction that came upon the city.

ii. Regarding the far greater destruction that is coming upon the whole earth, those who listen to and obey Jesus can escape the horrible destruction that will come.

(Luk 21:2) He also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins.⁴

(Luk 21:3) He⁵ said, "I tell you the truth,⁶ this poor widow has put in more than all of them.⁷

(Luk 21:4) For they all offered their gifts out of their wealth.⁸ But she, out of her poverty, put in everything she had to live on."⁹

(Luk 21:5) ***The Signs of the End of the Age***

Now¹⁰ while some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned¹¹ with beautiful stones and offerings,¹² Jesus¹³ said, (Luk 21:6) "As for these things that you are gazing at, the days will come when not one stone will be left on another.¹⁴ All will be torn down!"¹⁵

(Luk 21:7) So¹⁶ they asked him,¹⁷ "Teacher, when will these things¹⁸ happen? And what will be the sign that¹⁹ these things are about to take place?"

(Luk 21:8) He²⁰ said, "Watch out²¹ that you are not misled. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,'²² and, 'The time is near.'

Do not follow them!

(Luk 21:9) And when you hear of wars and rebellions,²³ do not be afraid.²⁴ For these things must happen first, but the end will not come at once."²⁵

(Luk 21:10) ***Persecution of Disciples***

Then he said to them, "Nation will rise up in arms²⁶ against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

(Luk 21:11) There will be great earthquakes, and famines²⁷ and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying sights²⁸ and great signs²⁹ from heaven.

(Luk 21:12) But before all this,³⁰ they will seize³¹ you and persecute you, handing you over to the synagogues³² and prisons. You³³ will be brought before kings and governors because of my name.

(Luk 21:13) This will be a time for you to serve as witnesses.³⁴

(Luk 21:14) Therefore be resolved³⁵ not to rehearse³⁶ ahead of time how to make your defense.

(Luk 21:15) For I will give you the words³⁷ along with the wisdom³⁸ that none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.

(Luk 21:16) You will be betrayed even by parents,³⁹ brothers, relatives,⁴⁰ and friends, and they will have some of you put to death.

(Luk 21:17) You will be hated by everyone because of my name.⁴¹

(Luk 21:18) Yet⁴² not a hair of your head will perish.⁴³

(Luk 21:19) By your endurance⁴⁴ you will gain⁴⁵ your lives.⁴⁶

(Luk 21:20) ***The Desolation of Jerusalem***

"But when you see Jerusalem⁴⁷ surrounded⁴⁸ by armies, then know that its⁴⁹ desolation⁵⁰ has come near.

(Luk 21:21) Then those who are in Judea must flee⁵¹ to the mountains. Those⁵² who are inside the city must depart.

Those⁵³ who are out in the country must not enter it, (Luk 21:22) because these are days of vengeance,⁵⁴ to fulfill⁵⁵ all that is written.

(Luk 21:23) Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing their babies in those days! For there will be great distress⁵⁶ on the earth and wrath against this people.

(Luk 21:24) They⁵⁷ will fall by the edge⁵⁸ of the sword and be led away as captives⁵⁹ among all nations. Jerusalem⁶⁰ will be trampled down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.⁶¹

(Luk 21:25) ***The Arrival of the Son of Man***

"And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars,⁶² and on the earth nations will be in distress,⁶³ anxious⁶⁴ over the roaring of the sea and the surging waves.

(Luk 21:26) People will be fainting from fear⁶⁵ and from the expectation of what is coming on the world, for *the powers of the heavens will be shaken*.⁶⁶

(Luk 21:27) Then⁶⁷ they will see *the Son of Man arriving in a cloud* ⁶⁸ with power and great glory.

(Luk 21:28) But when these things⁶⁹ begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption⁷⁰ is drawing near."

(Luk 21:29) ***The Parable of the Fig Tree***

Then⁷¹ he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the other trees.⁷²

(Luk 21:30) When they sprout leaves, you see⁷³ for yourselves and know that summer is now near.

(Luk 21:31) So also you, when you see these things happening, know⁷⁴ that the kingdom of God⁷⁵ is near.

(Luk 21:32) I tell you the truth,⁷⁶ this generation⁷⁷ will not pass away until all these things take place.

(Luk 21:33) Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.⁷⁸

(Luk 21:34) ***Be Ready!***

"But be on your guard⁷⁹ so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day close down upon you suddenly like a trap.⁸⁰

(Luk 21:35) For⁸¹ it will overtake⁸² all who live on the face of the whole earth.⁸³

(Luk 21:36) But stay alert at all times,⁸⁴ praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that must⁸⁵ happen, and to stand before the Son of Man."

(Luk 21:37) So⁸⁶ every day Jesus⁸⁷ was teaching in the temple courts,⁸⁸ but at night he went and stayed⁸⁹ on the Mount of Olives.⁹⁰

(Luk 21:38) And all the people⁹¹ came to him early in the morning to listen to him in the temple courts.⁹²

(Luk 22:1) ***Judas' Decision to Betray Jesus***

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread,¹ which is called the Passover, was approaching.

(Guzik)

Luk 22:1-71

Luke 22 - THE LAST SUPPER; JESUS IS BETRAYED

A. The Last Supper.

1. (Luk_22:1-6) Judas seeks to betray Jesus.

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people. Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.

a. **Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover:** The *time* is significant, because

at **Passover** not only was there a great expectation of the Messiah, but Jerusalem was also crowded with Messiah-expecting multitudes.

i. Because it was a major feast, many of the people who had heard and seen Jesus in the region of Galilee were in Jerusalem, with great respect and great expectation for Jesus and His ministry.

b. **For they feared the people:** The **chief priests and the scribes** did not fear God, but they did fear **the people**. They are not afraid to kill the Son of God; they just had to find a way to do it in a politically wise manner.

c. **Satan entered Judas:** Not that this diminishes Judas' personal responsibility (God allowed what Judas, in his corrupt heart, *wanted*), but it shows that the real enemy of Jesus was Satan, even more than Judas was an enemy.

i. Many have wondered about the motives of Judas; some have even said that he might have had a *noble* motive, such as wanted to "force" Jesus to show Himself as Messiah. The Bible indicates no such praiseworthy intention.

ii. It may well be that Judas followed Jesus from selfish motives, expecting to receive a position of great status and prestige when Jesus came triumphantly to Jerusalem as Messiah.

When Jesus came, and it was evident that He was not going to be the Messiah Judas hoped for, he may have lashed out against Jesus and opened this door to Satan out of spite. Jesus didn't give Judas what his selfish heart wanted, so Judas felt his ties to Jesus were broken. In essence, Judas may have said, "You betrayed me by not being the kind of Messiah I wanted.

So I will betray you."

iii. But what about Satan's motive? The death of Jesus on the cross was the great defeat of Satan; why is he steering things towards that course? Satan is not all knowing; perhaps he did not know how these events would turn against him - but he reads the Bible, so he should have!

iv. A better explanation is that Satan is not all-wise; even if he did know that the death of Jesus would *crush his head*, his hatred got the best of him. Since Satan is the great deceiver, he has no doubt deceived himself - and may actually believe that he could win over Jesus.

d. But it all plays into God's plan - this was the appointed time for Jesus to go to the cross, but before Judas' treachery, the leaders were not going to do it then, out of a fear of the people.

2. (Luk_22:7-13) Preparations for the Passover.

Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat." So they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?" And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. Then you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"'" Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready." So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.

a. **A man . . . carrying a pitcher:** This was an unusual sight, because **carrying a pitcher** was typically a woman's work, and men carried liquids in animal's skin containers. This would be a distinctive sign to the disciples.

b. **The Teacher says to you:** The scene here implies secrecy, and Jesus good reason to quietly make arrangements for Passover. He didn't want Judas to betray Him before He could give a final talk to the disciples.

c. **Eat the Passover with My disciples:** There seems to be a difference between the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) and John about the **Passover**. The implication in the synoptic gospels is that Jesus was crucified on the day after Passover, and that this meal was the day before. John

seems to say that Jesus was crucified on the day of Passover itself, as a Passover lamb (Joh_18:28, Joh_19:14).

i. "Possibly the best explanation is that there were different calendars in use. Jesus died as the Passover victims were being slain according to the official calendar; but he had held the Passover with his followers the previous evening, according to an unofficial calendar."

(Morris)

ii. None of the synoptic gospels mention a lamb at the Passover meal. This may be because they could not obtain one before the "official" day of Passover. In addition, Jesus may have wanted it this way, to emphasize the idea that *He* was the Passover sacrifice.

3. (Luk_22:14-20) The Last Supper.

When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, "With *fervent* desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide *it* among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

a. **With fervent desire I have desired:** This was a passionate moment for Jesus. It wasn't so much that He was saying "goodbye" to His disciples, as much as now He arrived at the central reason why He came to man: to institute a new covenant with men, based on His own sacrifice. This is not the beginning of the end; it is the beginning of the beginning.

i. **He took the cup . . . He also took the cup after supper:** From Luke, it seems that Jesus took the cup both

before and after the bread. According to the customs of a Passover dinner, this was nothing unusual - there would be four different cups of wine ceremonially sipped during the meal.

b. **I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes:** Jesus has not yet celebrated a Passover in heaven. He is waiting for all His people to be gathered to Him, then there will be a great supper, known as the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev_19:9). This is the fulfillment in the kingdom of God Jesus longs for.

c. Beyond all the controversy about what the elements of this supper really are and what they really mean, the command of Jesus to **do this in remembrance of Me** stands out. We must remember who Jesus is, and all He has done for us.

i. Every time Jesus is misrepresented, we have forgotten. Every time we rebel against the One who bought us, we have forgotten. Every time we look to ourselves instead of Jesus Himself, we have forgotten.

d. Beyond all the controversy about what the elements of this supper really are and what they really mean, the announcement that Jesus is bringing a **new covenant** stands out.

i. What mere man would have the audacity to institute a new covenant between God and man? But here, Jesus founds a **new covenant**, sealed with blood, even as the old covenant was sealed with blood (Exo_24:8).

ii. What is the **new covenant** all about? It is all about an *inner transformation*, that cleanses us from all sin. As Jer_31:34 says, *For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.* It is about putting God's Word and will in us, as Jer_31:33 says: *I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts.* It is all about a *new, close, relationship with God*, as Jer_31:33 says (*I will be there God, and they shall be My people*).

iii. Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we have can have a new covenant relationship with God. But many of us live as if there is no inner transformation, as if there is no cleansing from sin, as if there is no word and will of God in our hearts, and as if there is no new and close relationship with God.

4. (Luk_22:21-23) Woe to the betrayer.

“But behold, the hand of My betrayer *is* with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!” Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

a. **The Son of Man goes as it has been determined:** It was **determined** by prophecy that the Messiah should be betrayed (Psa_41:9), but woe to the one who does it! Judas cannot claim that he “helped” Jesus by fulfilling prophecy. He was and is fully accountable for his sin before God.

i. “The fact that God overrules the evil that bad people do as he brings his purposes to pass does not make them any the less evil.” (Morris)

b. **They began to question among themselves, which of them it was:** Judas had done his job well as a traitor, because none of the other disciples seemed to suspect him.

B. Final teachings to the disciples.

The fullness of this marvelous discourse must be gathered from all four gospels - especially from John chapters 13-16.

1. (Luk_22:24-27) Jesus teaches about true greatness.

Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’

But not so *among* you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who *is* greater, he who sits at the

table, or he who serves? *Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.*"

a. **A dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest:** It's almost frightening to think that after Jesus has poured three years of His life into these men; after they have seen the character of Jesus on display in almost every conceivable circumstance; that now, at the final hours before His betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion, they are arguing - about which of them is the greatest!

i. This seems to be a common topic of conversation among the disciples (Mat_18:1, Mat_20:20-26, Mar_9:33-34, Luk_9:46).

b. We might think that Jesus should have settled the issue by saying, "Hey dummies - *I'm* the greatest!"

Instead, Jesus answered their question by what He *did*. Joh_13:3-5 tells us that Jesus washed their feet after supper, and He may have spoken these words about true greatness while He was washing their feet, or after He was finished.

i. In fact, the supreme patience of Jesus is displayed in His gentle correction of His squabbling disciples. After all - didn't He have enough on His mind?

c. **The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them:** The world exercises authority and power with a certain style, all of it ultimately self-exalting. But Jesus wasn't like that, and neither should His followers be. In fact, the **greatest** should be like the **younger** (the one who didn't have a stake in the system, the outcast), and the one who **governs** should be like one who **serves**.

i. The idea of being called **benefactors** is really the idea of getting credit. Many people only will "serve" if they can be assured of getting proper credit.

ii. "In the ancient world it was accepted that age gave privileges; the youngest was, by definition, the lowliest." (Morris)

d. **For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table?** The

world regards the one who is served as **greater**, but Jesus showed us that true greatness is in serving, more than in being served.

i. Cultures have always envied the person who has many people serving him. In ancient China, the rich grew long, long fingernails, so long they could do nothing for themselves -

and this was seen as a sign of status.

ii. But the people who are really great in our lives are the servants. If the President took a month off, no one would really miss it; but if all the trash collectors in the country took the month off, we would miss it! Jesus is trying to re-arrange our thinking, our priorities.

d. Living as a servant really is the *best* way to live. We are no longer concerned for our own honor and credit; we don't walk around with hurt feelings and disappointed expectations, because all we want to do is to serve. We can always do what we want to do, because we can always serve somehow.

i. Don't we think that Jesus knew the best way to live?

ii. Jesus isn't saying that if you serve in a lowly place, you will be given a great place. He is saying that in God's eyes, the lowly place *is* the great place.

e. How much of a servant are you? We should measure ourselves against Jesus; but another good indicator is to see how we react when we are *treated* like a servant.

2. (Luk_22:28-30) The reward for the disciples.

"But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed *one* upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

a. **I bestow upon you a kingdom:** The disciples will receive a unique reward, because they are the ones who have **continued with** Jesus in His **trials**. Jesus appreciated and valued the support He received from His disciples.

b. The apostles will have special status in the Kingdom of God. They will **sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**, and their names will be on the twelve foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem (Rev_21:14).

c. Being a servant does not mean that we are unrewarded. Quite the opposite; God's greatest servants receive the greatest rewards. But a great servant does not serve for the sake of reward, but for the sake of God's glory.

3. (Luk_22:31-34) Jesus warns Peter of his coming fall.

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift *you* as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to *Me*, strengthen your brethren." But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

a. **Indeed, Satan has asked for you:** Jesus was aware of a spiritual battle behind the scenes. Peter was no doubt ignorant of the fact that **Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat** - Satan wanted to completely crush and defeat Peter.

i. Apparently, Satan *wanted* to do much more against Peter than the Lord would allow; and Satan could not do whatever he wanted against Peter, but he must *ask*.

ii. "Satan desires that in the sifting process 'no wheat shall remain', but that all (like Judas) will be blown away like chaff." (Geldenhuys)

b. **But I have prayed for you:** What prevented Satan from having his way with Peter had nothing to do with Peter. It was because of Jesus' prayers on Peter's behalf.

i. The thought of Jesus interceding for us, protecting us from Satan, is wonderful! How many times we would have perished, had not Jesus prayed for us!

c. **That your faith should not fail:** Peter's faith would falter, but **not fail**. Jesus did not see the temporary lapse

that was to come as a failure of faith, because He knew that Peter would return to Him.

i. In the Christian life, we may falter, but we must never fail. If we have denied Jesus in some way, then we must return to Him immediately.

ii. And, having returned, we must turn our focus towards helping others - **when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.** The one who returns after faltering isn't necessarily to be put on a shelf, or to become self-focused - but they should reach out and strengthen the brethren.

d. How could Peter say, **"Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death"**? Peter was unaware of both the spiritual reality and the spiritual battle that Jesus could see. Peter just looked to how he felt at the moment, and at the moment he felt pretty brave!

i. But when you are walking on feelings, all this can change pretty quickly. Soon, Peter will be intimidated before a humble servant girl, and deny to her that he even knew Jesus.

ii. "It is sometimes easier to bear a great load for Christ than a small one. Some of us could be martyrs at the stake more easily than confessors among sneering neighbors." (Maclaren) e. Jesus told Peter the truth about himself and the situation not to discourage him, but to let him know there is a spiritual reality and a spiritual battle that he is unaware of, but that Jesus knew well.

4. (Luk_22:35-38) Jesus calls the disciples to readiness.

And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing." Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take *it*, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end."

So they said, "Lord, look, here *are* two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough."

a. **But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack:** Jesus is saying: "I am on the point of leaving you, and when I am gone, you must use common sense means for provision and protection." Such practical considerations were not needed before, but were needed now.

b. The disciples had been sent out to do ministry without Jesus before (Luk_10:1-17), but then they were received with goodwill and hospitality. Now they are facing a hostile world without Jesus, and must be prepared.

c. **It is enough** means **enough of this kind of talk** (Jesus' firm way of ending the conversation), not *two swords will be enough*. How could two swords ever be enough against all those who came to arrest Jesus?

i. Jesus' disciples must be "just as determined and whole-hearted as a fighting man who gives up everything, even his garment, as long as he only possesses a sword to continue the struggle with." (Geldenhuys)

C. Jesus' agony, arrest and arraignment.

1. (Luk_22:39-46) Jesus' agony in the garden.

Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."

a. Jesus **went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed.** He had spent His nights there that week (Luk_21:37), and He refused to alter this routine, even though He knew it meant that Judas would easily find Him.

b. **He knelt down and prayed:** Here is the passionate account of an eyewitness, who no doubt related this incident to Luke. Only an eyewitness would remember a detail such as Jesus prayed **about a stone's throw** away from the disciples.

i. "The usual manner of prayer at that time was to pray in a standing position. That Jesus knelt down proves the violence of His struggle in Gethsemane." (Geldenhuys)

c. **Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me:** If Jesus knew what the Father's will was, why was this such agony? Because Jesus is going to the cross as a sacrifice for sins, and He was no dumb sacrificial animal, no victim of circumstances. He willingly resolved to lay down His life.

i. This helps us understand why Jesus used the figure of a **cup**. Repeatedly in the Old Testament, a cup is a powerful picture of the wrath and judgment of God:

For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is fully mixed, and He pours it out; surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth drain and drink down.

(Psa_75:8)

Awake, awake! Stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk at the hand of the Lord The cup of His fury; you have drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, and drained it out.

(Isa_51:17)

For thus says the Lord God of Israel to me: "Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it." (Jer_25:15)

ii. Jesus became, as it were, an enemy of God, who was judged and forced to drink the **cup** of the Father's fury, so we would not have to drink from that cup. Taking this figurative cup was the source of Jesus' greatest agony on the cross.

d. **Nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done:** Jesus came to a point of decision in Gethsemane. It wasn't that He had not decided nor consented before, but now He had come upon a unique point of decision. He drank the cup at Calvary, but He decided once for all to drink it at Gethsemane.

e. **Being in agony, He prayed more earnestly:** What did Jesus do in His time of **agony**? **He prayed more earnestly**, to the point where **His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground**.

i. "There have been cases in which persons in a debilitated state of body, or through horror of soul, have had their sweat tinged with blood. . . . Cases sometimes happen in which, through *mental pressure*, the pores may be so dilated that the blood may issue from them; so that there may be a bloody sweat." (Clarke)

ii. The Greek wording of Luk_22:44 is clear - Luke is not saying that Jesus' sweat was blood, but that it was *like* blood; either in the way that it poured off His brow, or because it was tinged with blood

f. **Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him:** In response to Jesus'

prayers, the Father did not take the cup from Jesus; but He strengthened Jesus to be able to take - and drink - the cup.

g. **He found them sleeping from sorrow:** The disciples were also filled with **sorrow**; but instead of praying, they slept. Jesus wakes them and encourages them to pray!

2. (Luk_22:47-53) Jesus is betrayed and arrested.

And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this."

And He touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

a. **Drew near to Jesus to kiss Him:** Apparently, Jesus was normal enough in appearance so that it was necessary that Judas specifically identify Him for the sake of those arresting Jesus, and he chose to identify Him by greeting Jesus with a **kiss**.

b. **Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?** Of course, Jesus knew the irony of being betrayed with a warm greeting; so He essentially asked Judas "are you so dead to all feeling that you can kiss and betray?" Judas is a good example of a seared conscience.

c. **And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear:** Joh_18:10

identifies this unnamed swordsman as Peter. Peter is a great example of someone who, wielding the power of this world in his hands, could only cut off ears; but wielding the Word of God, could pierce hearts for God's glory (Act_2:37).

i. "When the Church takes sword in hand, it usually shows that it does not know how to wield it, and as often as not has struck the wrong man." (Maclaren)

ii. Luke, with his medical precision, identifies the ear as the **right ear**. Assuming Peter was right handed, the only way to cut off someone's right ear in this manner is if you attack from *behind*. Peter probably attacked from behind!

d. **And He touched his ear and healed him:** Even here, Jesus is present to clean up the mess His disciples have left behind. He heals the damage done by Peter.

e. It **is your hour, and the power of darkness:** This is not in the sense that Jesus is out of control, but that He allows the darkness to do what it wanted to do all along -

arrest and kill Jesus. The light will shine the brightest in the midst of this **darkness**.

3. (Luk_22:54-62) Peter denies that he knows or is associated with Jesus.

Having arrested Him, they led *Him* and brought Him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed at a distance. Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him." But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." And after a little while another saw him and said, "You also are of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this *fellow* also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

a. Peter's first problem was that he **followed at a distance**. When we distance ourselves from Jesus, it is hard to make a proper stand for Him at the critical time.

b. Next, Peter **sat among them** - the ungodly - having forsaken the fellowship of the fleeing disciples.

Peter wants to seem just one of this crowd, and not be identified as a follower of Jesus.

c. First, Peter denied ever knowing Jesus (**Woman, I do not know Him**), then he denied being a follower of Jesus (**Man, I am not**), finally he denies that he is even from Galilee (**Man, I do not know what you are saying!**).

d. **While he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter:** At the crowing of the rooster, Jesus looked through the crowd around Him, and made eye contact with Peter. Peter was

immediately convicted of his sin; not only of his denial of Jesus, but also of the pride that led him to think he could never deny Him.

i. The ancient Greek word for **looked** “usually signifies a look of interest, love, or concern.”

(Liefeld)

e. Peter finally **remembered the word of the Lord**, but he remembered it too late - *after* he had sinned.

For now, all Peter can do is to weep bitterly - but he will be restored.

i. As much as Jesus’ promise that Peter would deny Him was true, so was the promise that *your faith should not fail* (Luk_22:32) - Peter has fallen, but he will not fall away.

ii. We all make promises to Jesus that we do not keep. When that is the case, there is an appropriate time to weep bitterly. But then there is a time to come back to Jesus, who will always receive you back.

4. (Luk_22:63-65) Jesus is beaten and mocked.

Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him. And having blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, “Prophecy! Who is the one who struck You?” And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him.

a. **Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him:** Jesus is under arrest at the home of the high priest. Even though He is in such a “spiritual” place, He is treated in this gross way - both beaten and mocked.

i. The children’s rhyme goes, “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” But this is a patently false statement, for words can hurt far past the time a broken bone is healed. Jesus endured the worst of both of these kinds of abuse, being both mocked and beaten.

b. **Prophecy! Who is the one who struck You?** Of course, Jesus not only could tell the one who struck Him, but he could also tell everything about the man - the physical

description, his life story, the number of hairs on his head, and every sin he had ever committed - but Jesus did not.

c. The idea of Jesus taking this mocking without reply is painful to us. We wonder why He, who had all the right and all the power to put an end to it immediately, why He endured it without a word.

i. He did it to demonstrate that the proper reply to hate is not more hate, but love.

ii. He did it to demonstrate His trust in God the Father, that God would vindicate Him and He did not need to defend Himself.

iii. He did it so that every time we are humiliated we can find refuge in a God who can say, "I know exactly what you are going through."

5. (Luk_22:66-71) Jesus' second trial before the Sanhedrin.

As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council, saying, "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will by no means believe. And if I also ask *you*, you will by no means answer Me or let *Me* go. Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God."

Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" So He said to them, "You *rightly* say that I am." And they said, "What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

a. On the night of His betrayal, and the day of His crucifixion, Jesus actually stood in trial several times, before different judges. It will be helpful to fill in the gaps provided by the other gospel accounts.

i. Before Jesus came to the home of Caiaphas, the official high priest, He was led to the home of Annas, who was the ex-high priest and the "power behind the throne" of the high priest (Joh_18:12-14, John 19-23).

ii. Then Jesus was led to the home of Caiaphas, the sitting high priest. There He was placed on trial before an ad-hoc

gathering of the Sanhedrin still during the night (Mat_26:57-68), when false witness were brought before the council and the high priest demanded to know of Jesus if He was the Son of God. To this question, Jesus replied: *"It is as you said."*

Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, *"He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! "What do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death."* (Mat_26:64-66)

iii. After that, the beating described in Luk_22:63-65 begins.

iv. When dawn breaks, the Sanhedrin gathered again, this time "officially," and they conducted the trial described in Luk_22:66-71.

b. As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council: Why did the Sanhedrin meet to put Jesus on trial again, after they had already condemned Him during the trial in the night?

i. Because by the Sanhedrin's own laws and regulations the night trial described in Mat_26:57-68 was illegal. To begin with, according to Jewish law, all criminal trials must begin and end in the daylight. This second trial was held because they knew the first one - the *real* trial - had no legal standing.

ii. According to Jewish law, only decisions made in the official meeting place were valid. The first trial was held at the home of Caiaphas, the high priest, so they called together this trial, held at **their council**.

iii. According to Jewish law, criminal cases could not be tried during the Passover season.

iv. According to Jewish law, only an acquittal could be issued on the day of the trial; guilty verdicts had to wait one night to allow for feelings of mercy to rise.

v. According to Jewish law, all evidence had to be guaranteed by two witnesses, who were separately examined and could not have contact with each other.

vi. According to Jewish law, false witness was punishable by death; nothing is done to the many false witnesses in Jesus' trial.

vii. According to Jewish law, a trial always began by bringing forth evidence for the innocence of the accused, before the evidence of guilt was offered; this was not the practice here.

c. **If I tell you, you will by no means believe:** Jesus is entirely correct here. He already told them at the night trial described in Matthew 26, and they found Him guilty. The present trial was all for show, and they had already decided on Jesus' guilt.

i. It is a terrible thing to pretend openness about Jesus. We must never act or talk as if we really wanted to know who Jesus is if we really have already made up our minds.

d. But Jesus at the same time stands His ground. In essence, His reply is "You may sit in judgment of Me today, but I one day will sit in judgment of you, when you will see that **the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God.**"

e. **What further testimony do we need?** This was an interesting statement. At this daytime trial, they made no effort to find testimony against Jesus, because the witnesses at the nighttime trial had hopelessly contradicted themselves. So they didn't bother to bring forth witnesses.

(Luk 22:2) The² chief priests and the experts in the law³ were trying to find some way⁴ to execute⁵ Jesus,⁶ for they were afraid of the people.⁷

(Luk 22:3) Then⁸ Satan⁹ entered Judas, the one called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve.¹⁰

(Luk 22:4) He went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers of the temple guard¹¹ how he might¹² betray Jesus,¹³ handing him over to them.¹⁴

(Luk 22:5) They¹⁵ were delighted¹⁶ and arranged to give him money.¹⁷

(Luk 22:6) So¹⁸ Judas¹⁹ agreed and began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus²⁰ when no crowd was present.²¹

(Luk 22:7) ***The Passover***

Then the day for the feast²² of Unleavened Bread came, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.²³

(Luk 22:8) Jesus²⁴ sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover²⁵ for us to eat."²⁶

(Luk 22:9) They²⁷ said to him, "Where do you want us to prepare²⁸ it?"

(Luk 22:10) He said to them, "Listen,²⁹ when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water³⁰ will meet you.³¹ Follow him into the house that he enters, (Luk 22:11) and tell the owner of the house,³² 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" '

(Luk 22:12) Then he will show you a large furnished room upstairs. Make preparations there."

(Luk 22:13) So³³ they went and found things³⁴ just as he had told them,³⁵ and they prepared the Passover.

(Luk 22:14) ***The Lord's Supper***

Now³⁶ when the hour came, Jesus³⁷ took his place at the table³⁸ and the apostles joined³⁹ him.

(Luk 22:15) And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired⁴⁰ to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

(Luk 22:16) For I tell you, I will not eat it again⁴¹ until it is fulfilled⁴² in the kingdom of God."⁴³

(Luk 22:17) Then⁴⁴ he took a cup,⁴⁵ and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves.

(Luk 22:18) For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit⁴⁶ of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."⁴⁷

(Luk 22:19) Then⁴⁸ he took bread, and after giving thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body⁴⁹ which is given for you.⁵⁰ Do this in remembrance of me."

(Luk 22:20) And in the same way he took⁵¹ the cup after they had eaten,⁵² saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant⁵³ in my blood.

(Luk 22:21) ***A Final Discourse***

"But look, the hand of the one who betrays⁵⁴ me is with me on the table.⁵⁵

(Luk 22:22) For the Son of Man is to go just as it has been determined,⁵⁶ but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!"

(Luk 22:23) So⁵⁷ they began to question one another as to which of them it could possibly be who would do this.

(Luk 22:24) A dispute also started⁵⁸ among them over which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.⁵⁹

(Luk 22:25) So⁶⁰ Jesus⁶¹ said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are called 'benefactors.'⁶²

(Luk 22:26) Not so with you;⁶³ instead the one who is greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader⁶⁴ like the one who serves.⁶⁵

(Luk 22:27) For who is greater, the one who is seated at the table,⁶⁶ or the one who serves? Is it not⁶⁷ the one who is seated at the table?

But I am among you as one⁶⁸ who serves.

(Luk 22:28) "You are the ones who have remained⁶⁹ with me in my trials.

(Luk 22:29) Thus⁷⁰ I grant⁷¹ to you a kingdom,⁷² just as my Father granted to me, (Luk 22:30) that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit⁷³ on thrones judging⁷⁴ the twelve tribes of Israel.

(Luk 22:31) "Simon,⁷⁵ Simon, pay attention!⁷⁶ Satan has demanded to have you all,⁷⁷ to sift you like wheat,⁷⁸

(Luk 22:32) but I have prayed for you, Simon,⁷⁹ that your faith may not fail.⁸⁰ When⁸¹ you have turned back,⁸² strengthen⁸³ your brothers."

(Luk 22:33) But Peter⁸⁴ said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death!"⁸⁵

(Luk 22:34) Jesus replied,⁸⁶ "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow⁸⁷ today until you have denied⁸⁸ three times that you know me."

(Luk 22:35) Then⁸⁹ Jesus⁹⁰ said to them, "When I sent you out with no money bag,⁹¹ or traveler's bag,⁹² or sandals, you didn't lack⁹³

anything, did you?" They replied,⁹⁴ "Nothing."

(Luk 22:36) He said to them, "But now, the one who⁹⁵ has a money bag must take it, and likewise a traveler's bag⁹⁶ too. And the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one.

(Luk 22:37) For I tell you that this scripture must be⁹⁷ fulfilled in me, ' ***And he was counted with the transgressors.***'⁹⁸ For what is written about me is being fulfilled."⁹⁹

(Luk 22:38) So¹⁰⁰ they said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords."¹⁰¹ Then he told them, "It is enough."¹⁰²

(Luk 22:39) ***On the Mount of Olives***

Then¹⁰³ Jesus¹⁰⁴ went out and made his way,¹⁰⁵ as he customarily did, to the Mount of Olives,¹⁰⁶ and the disciples followed him.

(Luk 22:40) When he came to the place,¹⁰⁷ he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation."¹⁰⁸

(Luk 22:41) He went away from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, (Luk 22:42) "Father, if you are willing, take¹⁰⁹ this cup¹¹⁰ away from me. Yet not my will but yours¹¹¹ be done."

(Luk 22:43) [Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.

(Luk 22:44) And in his anguish¹¹² he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.¹¹³

(Luk 22:45) When¹¹⁴ he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, exhausted¹¹⁵ from grief.

(Luk 22:46) So¹¹⁶ he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you will not fall into temptation!"¹¹⁷

(Luk 22:47) ***Betrayal and Arrest***

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd appeared,¹¹⁸ and the man named Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He walked up¹¹⁹ to Jesus to kiss him.¹²⁰

(Luk 22:48) But Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"¹²¹

(Luk 22:49) When¹²² those who were around him saw what was about to happen, they said, "Lord, should¹²³ we use our swords?"¹²⁴

(Luk 22:50) Then¹²⁵ one of them¹²⁶ struck the high priest's slave,¹²⁷ cutting off his right ear.

(Luk 22:51) But Jesus said,¹²⁸ "Enough of this!" And he touched the man's¹²⁹ ear and healed¹³⁰ him.

(Luk 22:52) Then¹³¹ Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard,¹³² and the elders who had come out to get him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs like you would against an outlaw?¹³³

(Luk 22:53) Day after day when I was with you in the temple courts,¹³⁴ you did not arrest me.¹³⁵ But this is your hour,¹³⁶ and that of the power¹³⁷ of darkness!"

(Luk 22:54) ***Jesus' Condemnation and Peter's Denials***

Then¹³⁸ they arrested¹³⁹ Jesus,¹⁴⁰ led him away, and brought him into the high priest's house.¹⁴¹ But Peter was following at a distance.

(Luk 22:55) When they had made a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them.

(Luk 22:56) Then a slave girl,¹⁴² seeing him as he sat in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man was with him too!"

(Luk 22:57) But Peter¹⁴³ denied it: "Woman,¹⁴⁴ I don't know¹⁴⁵ him!"

(Luk 22:58) Then¹⁴⁶ a little later someone else¹⁴⁷ saw him and said, "You are one of them too." But Peter said, "Man,¹⁴⁸ I am not!"

(Luk 22:59) And after about an hour still another insisted,¹⁴⁹ "Certainly this man was with him, because he too is a Galilean."¹⁵⁰

(Luk 22:60) But Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" At that moment,¹⁵¹ while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed.¹⁵²

(Luk 22:61) Then¹⁵³ the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord,¹⁵⁴ how he had said to him, "Before a rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."

(Luk 22:62) And he went outside and wept bitterly.¹⁵⁵

(Luk 22:63) Now¹⁵⁶ the men who were holding Jesus¹⁵⁷ under guard began to mock him and beat him.

(Luk 22:64) They¹⁵⁸ blindfolded him and asked him repeatedly,¹⁵⁹ "Prophecy! Who hit you?"¹⁶⁰

(Luk 22:65) They also said many other things against him, reviling¹⁶¹ him.

(Luk 22:66) When day came, the council of the elders of the people gathered together, both the chief priests and the experts in the law.¹⁶² Then¹⁶³ they led Jesus¹⁶⁴ away to their council¹⁶⁵

(Luk 22:67) and said, "If¹⁶⁶ you are the Christ,¹⁶⁷ tell us." But he said to them, "If¹⁶⁸ I tell you, you will not¹⁶⁹ believe, (Luk 22:68) and if¹⁷⁰ I ask you, you will not¹⁷¹ answer.

(Luk 22:69) But from now on¹⁷² *the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand* ¹⁷³ of the power¹⁷⁴ of God."

(Luk 22:70) So¹⁷⁵ they all said, "Are you the Son of God,¹⁷⁶ then?" He answered¹⁷⁷ them, "You say¹⁷⁸ that I am."

(Luk 22:71) Then¹⁷⁹ they said, "Why do we need further testimony? We have heard it ourselves¹⁸⁰ from his own lips!"¹⁸¹

(Luk 23:1) ***Jesus Brought Before Pilate***

Then¹ the whole group of them rose up and brought Jesus² before Pilate.³

(Guzik)

Luk 23:1-56

Luke 23 - Jesus' Trial, Death and Burial

A. Jesus on trial.

1. (Luk_23:1-7) The first trial before Pilate.

Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate. And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "*It is as you say.*" So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man." But they were the more fierce, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place." When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

a. **Led Him to Pilate:** The Jews had no authority to administer the death penalty, so they went to Pilate, who was the Roman governor over the region of Judea.

i. The Jewish leaders had reason to expect a favorable result when they went to Pilate.

Secular history shows us that he was a cruel, ruthless man, completely insensitive to the moral feelings of others. Surely, they thought, *Pilate* will put this Jesus to death.

b. **We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King:** At the same time, they know Pilate would be unconcerned with what they had “convicted” Jesus of - blasphemy. So, they blatantly lied and brought up other charges.

i. Essentially, these are their charges:

o That Jesus was a revolutionary (**perverting the nation**).

o That Jesus incited the people not to pay their taxes (**forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar**).

o That Jesus claimed to be a king in opposition to Caesar (**saying that He Himself is Christ, a King**).

c. **Then Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?”** We can only wonder what Pilate thought when he first laid eyes on Jesus, when he saw this beaten and bloodied Man before him.

Jesus didn’t look especially regal or majestic as He stood before Pilate, so the Roman governor was probably sarcastic or ironic when he asked, **“Are You the King of the Jews?”**

d. Though Pilate was a cruel, ruthless man; he wasn’t stupid. He could see through the motives of the Jewish leaders, and had no problem in sizing up Jesus and the whole situation, and returning a verdict: **I find no fault in this Man.**

i. By any stretch of the imagination, that was a “not guilty” verdict. Pilate knows and declares that Jesus is innocent of any crime, and that He should be set free.

e. **But they were the more fierce:** In response, the Jewish leaders became **more fierce**, and emphasized their accusation that Jesus was a leader of insurrection. This was a crime that any Roman governor had to be very careful of.

f. **And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod:** Pilate remained perplexed and unwilling to make a hard choice for Jesus; so he tried to do nothing - he sends Jesus on to Herod, because Jesus was from Galilee, the area where Herod ruled.

2. (Luk_23:8-12) The trial before Herod.

Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long *time* to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked *Him*, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.

That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.

a. **When Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him:** Herod had surely heard much about Jesus, but his only interest was a desire to be amused and entertained; he never took Jesus seriously.

b. **Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing:** Jesus saw right through this wretched, shallow man, and has **nothing** to say to Him. This, the same man who murdered John the Baptist, now regards Jesus as a miracle worker for his own entertainment. Even when others **vehemently accused Him**, Jesus had nothing to say to Herod.

c. **Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him:** This shows what Herod really thought of Jesus. When Jesus refused to entertain him, Herod entertained himself by mistreating Jesus.

i. "The mockery made it plain that Herod did not take the charge seriously. That is the really frightening thing about the incident. With the Son of God before him Herod could only jest."

(Morris)

d. **That very day Pilate and Herod became friends:** Significantly, Herod and Pilate **became friends** that day.

They found no common ground except their opposition to Jesus.

e. Thus far, we have seen three different attitudes towards Jesus; but they all agree on rejecting Him.

o The religious authorities hated Jesus.

o Pilate knew something of who Jesus was, but was unwilling to make an unpopular stand for Him.

o Herod didn't even take Jesus seriously; he was only interested in amusement and entertainment.

3. (Luk_23:13-17) The second trial before Pilate.

Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, "You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined *Him* in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release *Him*" (for it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast).

a. Pilate could not say it more strongly: **I have found no fault in this Man . . . indeed nothing worthy of death has been done by Him.** Jesus was innocent of any crime, and Pilate declared Him so.

b. **I will therefore chastise Him and release Him:** This may sound like Pilate suggests a light punishment. But the chastisement he has in mind is not light at all. The Roman custom of scourging was a brutal whipping.

i. The victim of a Roman scourging was tied against a post, and struck with a whip that had bits of glass, sharp rock, and metal tied to the end of leather cords. The whip would be struck at the top and dragged down the back, until the victim's entire back was a bloody, open wound. Many people died just from this scourging.

ii. But if Jesus is an innocent man, why even this? Could we imagine a judge saying, "You're innocent, so you only need to pay a \$10,000 fine"?

c. **For it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast:** But Pilate believed he had a way for Jesus to escape death. He planned to release Him according to the custom of releasing a prisoner every Passover season.

i. Pilate figured, “If this man claimed to be king, and was even the slightest bit hostile to Rome, then the crowd will love him. These Jewish leaders don’t want Jesus to go free, but the crowd will sympathize with him.”

4. (Luk_23:18-25) The crowd makes its choice.

And they all cried out at once, saying, “Away with this *Man*, and release to us Barabbas”; who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder. Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them.

But they shouted, saying, “Crucify *Him*, crucify Him!” Then he said to them the third time, “Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let *Him* go.” But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

a. **Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas:**

The crowd, whom Pilate was convinced would release Jesus, instead condemned Him. Because of this, Pilate found it impossible to go against both the Jewish leaders and the crowd.

b. **But they shouted, saying, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!”** It is a strange, almost insane scene: a cruel, ruthless Roman governor trying to win the life of a miracle-working Jewish teacher against the strenuous efforts of both the Jewish leaders and the crowd.

i. “Their *loud cries* give the impression that a riot was beginning to build up. It must have been obvious to Pilate

that the situation was becoming increasingly ugly.” (Morris)

ii. We may imagine that many in this crowd had, just a few days before, been crying “Hosanna” to Jesus. But there are always plenty of people who will do whatever the crowd does.

iii. How could the crowd turn so quickly against Jesus? There are many possible

explanations. First, many of them were probably disappointed that this Messiah who rode into Jerusalem didn’t do what they wanted a Messiah to do. Second, there is a tendency in many people to tear down the very heroes they have built up; we see this in our culture today.

c. And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will: So the crowd rejected Jesus and embraced Barabbas, whose name means “son of the father,” and who was a terrorist and a murderer.

i. If anyone should be able to say, “Jesus died for me,” it was Barabbas. He knew what it was to have Jesus die on his behalf, the innocent for the guilty.

d. He delivered Jesus to their will: Is accurate, and the truth - but only *part* of the truth. Jesus was also delivered to His Father’s will, and the eternal purpose of God, predestined before the world was ever created, would certainly be accomplished.

B. Jesus dies and is buried.

1. (Luk_23:26) Simon carries Jesus’ cross.

Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear *it* after Jesus.

a. As they led Him away: Even before Jesus was to be scourged, His physical condition was weak. We can assume that Jesus was in good physical condition up until the night of His arrest; “The rigors of Jesus’

ministry (that is, travelling by foot throughout Palestine) would have precluded any major physical illness or a weak general constitution.” (Dr. William Edwards [with others] in *JAMA*, 3/21/86) b. During the 12 hours between 9 p.m. Thursday and 9 a.m. Friday, Jesus suffered many things, both physically and in the high-stress challenges that took a toll on Him physically.

i. Jesus suffered great emotional stress in the Garden of Gethsemane, as indicated when *His sweat became like great drops of blood* (Luk_22:44). “Although this is a very rare phenomenon, bloody sweat (hematidrosis or hemohidrosis) may occur in highly emotional states or in persons with bleeding disorders. As a result of hemorrhage into the sweat glands, the skin becomes fragile and tender.” (Edwards)

ii. Jesus suffered the emotional stress of abandonment by His disciples.

iii. Jesus suffered a severe physical beating at the home of the high priest.

iv. Jesus suffered a sleepless night.

v. Jesus suffered, being forced to walk more than two and a half miles.

vi. All of these factors made Jesus especially vulnerable to the effects of scourging.

c. Before Jesus took the cross, He was whipped - scourged - as Pilate had earlier promised (*I will therefore chastise Him*, Luk_23:16).

i. “Scourging was a legal preliminary to every Roman execution, and only women and Roman senators or soldiers (except in cases of desertion) were exempt.” (Edwards)

ii. The goal of the scourging was to weaken the victim to a state just short of collapse and death. “As the Roman soldiers repeatedly struck the victim’s back with full force, the iron balls would cause deep contusions, and the leather thongs and sheep bones would cut into the skin and subcutaneous tissues. Then, as the flogging continued, the

lacerations would tear into the underlying skeletal muscles and produce quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh.

Pain and blood loss generally set the stage for circulatory shock. The extent of blood loss may well have determined how long the victim would survive the cross.” (Edwards)

iii. “The severe scourging, with its intense pain and appreciable blood loss, most probably left Jesus in a pre-shock state. Moreover, hematidrosis had rendered his skin particularly tender.

The physical and mental abuse meted out by the Jews and the Romans, as well as the lack of food, water, and sleep, also contributed to his generally weakened state. Therefore, even before the actual crucifixion, Jesus’ physical condition was at least serious and possibly critical.” (Edwards)

d. **As they led Him away:** Before Jesus was led away, His clothes were stripped off. “When the soldiers tore the robe from Jesus’ back, the probably reopened the scourging wounds.” (Edwards) e. **As they led Him away:** As Jesus was led away to be crucified, He was - like all victims of crucifixion -

forced to carry the wood He would hang upon.

i. The weight of the entire cross was typically 300 pounds. The victim only carried the crossbar, which weighed anywhere from 75 to 125 pounds. When the victim carried the crossbar, he was usually stripped naked, and his hands were often tied to the wood.

ii. The upright beams of a cross were usually permanently fixed in a visible place outside of the city walls, beside a major road. It is likely that on many occasions, Jesus passed by the very upright He would hang upon

f. Because Jesus was in such a weakened condition, **they laid hold of a certain man** to carry the cross for Him. The man’s name was **Simon**, and he was from Cyrene in North Africa (modern day Libya).

i. No doubt, Simon was visiting Jerusalem as a Passover pilgrim from his native land (some 800 miles away). He

knew little if anything about this Jesus, and had no desire to be associated with this Man who was condemned to die as a criminal.

ii. Yet, the Romans were the law, and Simon was not given a choice - **they laid hold of him, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it.** Perhaps he was chosen because his skin was black, and he was more conspicuous in the crowd.

iii. Wonderfully, we have reason to believe that Simon came to know what it *really means* to take up one's cross and follow Jesus. We know that his sons became leaders among the early Christians (Mar_15:21 and Rom_16:13).

2. (Luk_23:27-31) Jesus speaks to the **Daughters of Jerusalem.**

And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed *are* the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!'

Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"' For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?"

a. It was customary for a **great multitude** to follow a condemned criminal on his way to crucifixion.

i. As they made their way, a Roman guard led with a sign that carried the man's name and crime, and called out the name and the crime along the way to the place of crucifixion. They usually didn't take the shortest way to the place of crucifixion, so as many people as possible could see how the Roman Empire treated its enemies.

b. **Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children:** With good reason, certain women **mourned and lamented** when they saw Jesus being treated in this fashion. But Jesus essentially

told them, “don’t weep for Me, weep for those who reject Me.”

c. **For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?** The idea is “If this is the fate of the innocent (Jesus referring to Himself), what will happen to the guilty?”

3. (Luk_23:32-33) Jesus is crucified.

There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

a. **When they had come to the place called Calvary:**

There was a specific place outside the city walls of Jerusalem, yet still very close, where people were crucified. At this **place called Calvary** Jesus died for our sins, and our salvation was accomplished. **Calvary** means, “place of a skull,” and it was the place where criminals were crucified.

b. **Where they crucified Him:** What was it like to be crucified? In days the New Testament was first written, the practice needed no explanation. But we would do well to appreciate just what happened when someone was crucified.

i. “Although the Romans did not invent crucifixion, they perfected it as a form of torture and capital punishment that was designed to produce a slow death with maximum pain and suffering.” (Edwards)

ii. The combination of scourging and crucifixion made death on the cross especially brutal.

The victim’s back was first torn open by the scourging, then the clotting blood was ripped open again when the clothes were torn off before crucifixion. The victim was thrown on the ground to fix his hands to the crossbeam, and the wounds on the back were again be torn open and contaminated with dirt. Then, as he hung on the cross, with each breath, the painful wounds on the back scraped against the rough wood of the upright beam and were further aggravated.

iii. When the nail was driven through the wrists, it severed the large median nerve. This stimulated nerve produced excruciating bolts of fiery pain in both arms, and often gave the victim a claw-like grip in the hands.

iv. Beyond the excruciating pain, the major effect of crucifixion was to inhibit normal breathing. The weight of the body, pulling down on the arms and shoulders, tended to fix the respiratory muscles in an inhalation state, and hindered exhalation. The lack of adequate respiration resulted in severe muscle cramps, which hindered breathing even further. To get a good breath, the victim had to push against the feet, and flex the elbows, pulling from the shoulders. Putting the weight of the body on the feet produced searing pain, and flexing of the elbows twisted the hands hanging on the nails. Lifting the body for a breath also painfully scraped the back against the rough wooden post. Each effort to get a proper breath was agonizing, exhausting, and led to a sooner death.

v. "Not uncommonly, insects would light upon or burrow into the open wounds or the eyes, ears, and nose of the dying and helpless victim, and birds of prey would tear at these sites.

Moreover, it was customary to leave the corpse on the cross to be devoured by predatory animals." (Edwards)

vi. Death from crucifixion could come from many sources: acute shock from blood loss; being too exhausted to breathe any longer; dehydration; stress-induced heart attack, or congestive heart failure leading to a cardiac rupture. If the victim did not die quickly enough, the legs were broken, and the victim was soon unable to breathe.

vii. How bad was crucifixion? We get our English word *excruciating* from the Roman word "out of the cross." "Consider how heinous sin must be in the sight of God, when it requires such a sacrifice!" (Clarke)

c. The most significant thing about Jesus' suffering was that He was not, in any sense, the victim of circumstances. He

was in control. Jesus said of His life in Joh_10:18, *no one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself*. It is terrible to be forced to endure such torture, but to freely choose it out of love is remarkable.

d. **The criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left:** In His death, Jesus was identified with sinners - He was crucified between two criminals.

4. (Luk_23:34-38) Jesus on the cross.

Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots. And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God." The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself." And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: This is the King of the Jews.

a. **Father, forgive them:** The love of Jesus never fails. He even makes a promise of forgiveness to God for His executioners.

b. **Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do:** Jesus did not grant forgiveness to those who crucified Him. He did not say, "I forgive you." Instead, He prayed to God the Father for their forgiveness.

i. Jesus probably prayed this way for His enemies all through His ministry, but now we hear it from His lips because He has no quiet place to pray.

ii. In this Jesus fulfilled His own command to *love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good for those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you* (Mat_5:44).

c. **For they do not know what they do:** In this, Jesus recognized the blindness of His enemies in His prayer. This does not excuse the guilt of those who put Jesus on the cross; but Jesus puts His enemies in the best possible light in

His prayer to the Father. We need to show love by praying the same way.

d. When we pray like this for our enemies, we make the “promise of forgiveness” to God, not to the person who wronged us. We can’t make the promise to them, because they will not repent. But by making the promise to God, we keep our hearts free from the cancer of resentment and keep ourselves ready to forgive.

e. **And they divided His garments and cast lots:** Jesus came all the way down the ladder to accomplish our salvation. He let go of absolutely everything - even His clothes - becoming completely poor for us, so we could become completely rich in Him.

f. In the midst of this awesome display of love, Jesus is not honored. Instead, He is **mocked**, and His enemies **sneered, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.”**

i. It is precisely because He did *not* save Himself that He can save others. Love kept Jesus on the cross, not nails!

5. (Luk_23:39-43) A criminal on a cross finds salvation.

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.” But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

a. **One of the criminals** joined in mocking Jesus. After all, if Jesus were the Messiah, He should save those who are being crucified with Him! But the other criminal saw things differently.

i. He respected God (**Do you not even fear God**).

ii. He knew his own sin (**under the same condemnation . . . we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of**

our deeds).

iii. He knew Jesus (**this Man has done nothing wrong**).

iv. He called out to Jesus (**he said to Jesus**).

v. He called out to Jesus as Lord (**he said to Jesus, “Lord . . .”**).

vi. He believed Jesus was who Jesus said He was (**remember me when You come into Your kingdom**).

vii. He believed the promise of everlasting life from Jesus.

b. Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise: With these words, Jesus wanted to give this man *assurance*. Where is Paradise? It is in heaven, and that man went to heaven to be with Jesus, but it is the presence of Jesus (**with Me**) that makes it Paradise.

i. Here is something truly remarkable: a deathbed conversion. This is the only one in the Bible! There *is* one deathbed conversion in the Bible, so that no one would despair; but *only one*, so that no one would presume.

ii. You *might* trust in Jesus just before you die; but that is like trusting that you will be close enough to a rock to save yourself as you approach the edge of Niagara Falls!

iii. Significantly, this thief who trusted in Jesus at the last moment goes to the same heaven anyone else does. Is this fair? In a sense, no; but it gives glory to the grace of God, not to human merit in salvation. In heaven, we will all be filled to the full with joy and reward; but the degree of our faithfulness now determines how big our container for joy and reward will be in heaven, though all will be filled to the fullest they can hold.

c. This assurance was so important to Jesus that it cost Him something; “Since speech occurs during exhalation, these short, terse utterances must have been particularly difficult and painful.” (Edwards) d. We see Jesus functioning as prophet, priest and king, even at His death.

i. He was a *Prophet* to the Daughters of Jerusalem.

ii. He was a *Priest* when He forgave those who nailed Him to the cross.

iii. He was a *King* when He authoritatively assured the penitent criminal salvation and entrance into the Kingdom.

6. (Luk_23:44-46) Jesus dies on the cross.

Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last.

a. **There was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour:** The remarkable darkness all over the earth showed the agony of creation itself in the Creator's suffering. "Origen (*Contra Celsus*, ii,33) and Eusebius (*Chron.*) quote words from Phlegon (a Roman historian) in which he makes mention of an extraordinary solar eclipse as well as of an earthquake about the time of the crucifixion." (Geldenhuys) i. Phlegon, Roman historian wrote this: "In the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad, there was an extraordinary eclipse of the sun: at the sixth hour, the day turned into dark night, so that the stars in heaven were seen; and there was an earthquake." (Cited in Clarke)

ii. This is especially remarkable because during a full moon - which Passover was always held at - it was impossible that there be a *natural* eclipse of the sun.

b. **The veil of the temple was torn in two:** The tearing of the temple veil signified at least two things.

First, now man has free access to the throne of grace by the cross. Second, no one should ever think again that God dwells in temples made with hands.

c. When Jesus **cried out with a loud voice**, Joh_19:30 tells us what He said: *it is finished*, which is one word in the Greek (*tetelestai* - "paid in full"). This is the cry of a winner, because Jesus had paid in full the debt of sin we owed, and had finished the eternal purpose of the cross.

i. At some point before He died, before the veil was torn in two, before He cried out *it is finished*, an awesome spiritual

transaction took place. The Father set upon Jesus all the guilt and wrath our sin deserved, and He bore it in Himself perfectly, totally satisfying the wrath of God for us.

ii. As horrible as the physical suffering of Jesus was, this spiritual suffering - the act of being judged for sin in our place - was what Jesus really dreaded about the cross. This was the *cup* -

the cup of God's righteous wrath - that He trembled at drinking (Luk_22:39-46, Psa_75:8, Isa_51:17, Jer_25:15). On the cross, Jesus became, as it were, an enemy of God who was judged and forced to drink the cup of the Father's fury. He did it so we would not have to drink that cup.

iii. Isa_53:3-5 puts it powerfully: *He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.*

iv. "Reader! *one drop* of this cup would bear down thy soul to endless ruin; and these agonies would annihilated the universe. He suffered *alone*: for the people there was none with him; because his sufferings were to make an atonement for the sins of the world: and in the work of redemption he had no helper." (Clarke)

v. **Having said this, He breathed His last:** And when that was accomplished (who knows how long it could have lasted?), there was no reason for Jesus to "hang around" on the cross. His work was done and He could go on now.

d. **Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit:** This shows that Jesus gave up His life when He wanted to and how He wanted to. No one took His life from Him; He gave it up when His work was finished. Jesus is not a victim we should pity, but a conqueror we should admire.

i. Save your pity for those who reject the complete work of Jesus on the cross at Calvary; for those preachers who do not have the heart of Paul in 1Co_1:23, when he proclaimed the center of the Christian message: *we preach Christ crucified*.

7. (Luk_23:47-49) The reaction of bystanders at Jesus' death. So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!" And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

a. The centurion, who **glorified God** and saw Jesus for who He was (**Certainly this was a righteous man**) is a picture of all who come to Jesus through the cross, fulfilling Jesus' promise *if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself* (Joh_12:32).

i. Surely, this centurion had seen many people crucified before. Yet there was something so remarkable about Jesus that he said something about Him that he could say about no one else.

b. **The whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned:** Others went home sadly; they were too close to Jesus to see how remarkable His death was, and they had forgotten His promise to rise again. But their hearts were ready for the news of a risen Savior.

8. (Luk_23:50-56) Jesus is buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

Now behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed. *He was* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb *that was* hewn out of the rock, where no one had

ever lain before. That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.

And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

a. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus: Customarily, the bodies of crucified criminals were left on their crosses to rot or be eaten by wild animals. But the Jews wanted no such horror displayed during the Passover season, and Romans were known to grant the corpses to friends or relatives for proper burial.

b. That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near: They were unable to properly prepare the body of Jesus for burial because of the coming Sabbath. So in hurried preparation, Jesus' body was placed in a borrowed tomb.

i. "In the hours of crisis it is often the Peters who have sworn loyalty to Jesus with big gestures and fullness of self-confidence, that disappoint, and it is the secret and quiet followers of the Master (like Joseph, Nicodemus and the women) that do not hesitate to serve Him in love - at whatever the cost." (Geldenhuys)

c. Laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before: Tombs like this were very expensive. It was quite a sacrifice for Joseph of Arimathea to give his up - but Jesus would only use it for a few days!

(Luk 23:2) They⁴ began to accuse⁵ him, saying, "We found this man subverting⁶ our nation, forbidding⁷ us to pay the tribute tax⁸ to Caesar⁹ and claiming that he himself is Christ,¹⁰ a king."

(Luk 23:3) So¹¹ Pilate asked Jesus,¹² "Are you the king¹³ of the Jews?" He replied, "You say so."¹⁴

(Luk 23:4) Then¹⁵ Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for an accusation¹⁶ against this man."

(Luk 23:5) But they persisted¹⁷ in saying, "He incites¹⁸ the people by teaching throughout all Judea. It started in Galilee and ended up here!"¹⁹

(Luk 23:6) ***Jesus Brought Before Herod***

Now when Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.

(Luk 23:7) When²⁰ he learned that he was from Herod's jurisdiction,²¹ he sent him over to Herod,²² who also happened to be in Jerusalem²³ at that time.

(Luk 23:8) When²⁴ Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform²⁵ some miraculous sign.²⁶

(Luk 23:9) So²⁷ Herod²⁸ questioned him at considerable length; Jesus²⁹ gave him no answer.

(Luk 23:10) The chief priests and the experts in the law³⁰ were there, vehemently accusing him.³¹

(Luk 23:11) Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then,³² dressing him in elegant clothes,³³

Herod³⁴ sent him back to Pilate.

(Luk 23:12) That very day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other,³⁵ for prior to this they had been enemies.³⁶

(Luk 23:13) ***Jesus Brought Before the Crowd***

Then³⁷ Pilate called together the chief priests, the³⁸ rulers, and the people,

(Luk 23:14) and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was misleading³⁹ the people. When I examined him before you, I⁴⁰

did not find this man guilty⁴¹ of anything you accused him of doing.

(Luk 23:15) Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, he has done nothing⁴² deserving death.⁴³

(Luk 23:16) I will therefore have him flogged⁴⁴ and release him."⁴⁵

(Luk 23:17) *(TEXT OMITTED)*

(Luk 23:18) But they all shouted out together,⁴⁶ "Take this man⁴⁷ away! Release Barabbas for us!"

(Luk 23:19) (This⁴⁸ was a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection⁴⁹ started in the city, and for murder.)⁵⁰

(Luk 23:20) Pilate addressed them once again because he wanted⁵¹ to release Jesus.

(Luk 23:21) But they kept on shouting,⁵² "Crucify, crucify⁵³ him!"

(Luk 23:22) A third time he said to them, "Why? What wrong has he done? I have found him guilty⁵⁴ of no crime deserving death.⁵⁵ I will therefore flog⁵⁶ him and release him."

(Luk 23:23) But they were insistent,⁵⁷ demanding with loud shouts that he be crucified. And their shouts prevailed.

(Luk 23:24) So⁵⁸ Pilate⁵⁹ decided⁶⁰ that their demand should be granted.

(Luk 23:25) He released the man they asked for, who had been thrown in prison for insurrection and murder. But he handed Jesus over⁶¹ to their will.⁶²

(Luk 23:26) ***The Crucifixion***

As⁶³ they led him away, they seized Simon of Cyrene,⁶⁴ who was coming in from the country.⁶⁵ They placed the cross on his back and made him carry it behind Jesus.⁶⁶

(Luk 23:27) A great number of the people followed him, among them women⁶⁷ who were mourning⁶⁸ and wailing for him.

(Luk 23:28) But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem,⁶⁹ do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves⁷⁰ and for your children.

(Luk 23:29) For this is certain:⁷¹ The days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore children, and the breasts that never nursed!'⁷²

(Luk 23:30) Then they will begin *to say to the mountains, 73 ' Fall on us!' and to the hills, ' Cover us! '74*

(Luk 23:31) For if such things are done⁷⁵ when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"⁷⁶

(Luk 23:32) Two other criminals⁷⁷ were also led away to be executed with him.

(Luk 23:33) So⁷⁸ when they came to the place that is called "The Skull,"⁷⁹ they crucified⁸⁰ him there, along with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.

(Luk 23:34) [But Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."]⁸¹ Then⁸² *they threw dice 83 to divide his clothes.*⁸⁴

(Luk 23:35) The people also stood there watching, but the rulers ridiculed⁸⁵ him, saying, "He saved others. Let him save⁸⁶ himself if⁸⁷

he is the Christ⁸⁸ of God, his chosen one!"

(Luk 23:36) The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine,⁸⁹

(Luk 23:37) and saying, "If⁹⁰ you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!"

(Luk 23:38) There was also an inscription⁹¹ over him, "This is the king of the Jews."

(Luk 23:39) One of the criminals who was hanging there railed at him, saying, "Aren't⁹² you the Christ?⁹³ Save yourself and us!"

(Luk 23:40) But the other rebuked him, saying,⁹⁴ "Don't⁹⁵ you fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?⁹⁶

(Luk 23:41) And we rightly so, for we are getting what we deserve for what we did, but this man has done nothing⁹⁷

wrong."

(Luk 23:42) Then⁹⁸ he said, "Jesus, remember me⁹⁹ when you come in¹⁰⁰ your kingdom."

(Luk 23:43) And Jesus¹⁰¹ said to him, "I tell you the truth,¹⁰² today¹⁰³ you will be with me in paradise."¹⁰⁴

(Luk 23:44) It was now¹⁰⁵ about noon,¹⁰⁶ and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon,¹⁰⁷

(Luk 23:45) because the sun's light failed.¹⁰⁸ The temple curtain¹⁰⁹ was torn in two.

(Luk 23:46) Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, ***into your hands I commit my spirit!***"¹¹⁰ And after he said this he breathed his last.

(Luk 23:47) Now when the centurion¹¹¹ saw what had happened, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent!"¹¹²

(Luk 23:48) And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts.¹¹³

(Luk 23:49) And all those who knew Jesus¹¹⁴ stood at a distance, and the women who had followed him from Galilee saw¹¹⁵ these things.

(Luk 23:50) ***Jesus' Burial***

Now¹¹⁶ there was a man named Joseph who was a member of the council,¹¹⁷ a good and righteous man.

(Luk 23:51) (He¹¹⁸ had not consented¹¹⁹ to their plan and action.) He¹²⁰ was from the Judean town¹²¹ of Arimathea, and was looking forward to¹²² the kingdom of God.¹²³

(Luk 23:52) He went to Pilate and asked for the body¹²⁴ of Jesus.

(Luk 23:53) Then¹²⁵ he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth,¹²⁶ and placed it¹²⁷ in a tomb cut out of the rock,¹²⁸ where no one had yet been buried.¹²⁹

(Luk 23:54) It was the day of preparation¹³⁰ and the Sabbath was beginning.¹³¹

(Luk 23:55) The¹³² women who had accompanied Jesus¹³³ from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it.

(Luk 23:56) Then¹³⁴ they returned and prepared aromatic spices¹³⁵ and perfumes.¹³⁶

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.¹³⁷

(Luk 24:1) ***The Resurrection***

Now on the first day¹ of the week, at early dawn, the women² went to the tomb, taking the aromatic spices³ they had prepared.

(Guzik)

Luk 24:1-53

Luke 24 - THE RESURRECTED JESUS

A. The resurrection of Jesus is discovered.

1. (Luk_24:1-3) Women followers of Jesus discover the empty tomb of Jesus.

Now on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

a. **Came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared:** The actual *event* of Jesus' resurrection is nowhere described, but the discovery of it is recorded in some detail. Here, the women who intended to give Jesus' body a more proper preparation for burial discover that the stone is rolled away from the tomb, and that the body of Jesus is not inside the tomb.

i. A rich man like Joseph of Arimathea would probably have a tomb that was carved into solid rock; this tomb was in a garden near the place of crucifixion (Joh_19:41). The tomb would have a small entrance and perhaps one or more compartments where bodies were laid out after being

somewhat mummified with spices, ointments, and linen strips. Customarily, the Jews left these bodies alone for a few years until they decayed down to the bones, then the bones were placed in a small stone box known as an ossuary. The ossuary remained in the tomb with the remains of other family members.

ii. The door to the tomb would be made of a heavy, circular shaped stone, running in a groove and settled down into a channel, so it could not be moved except by several strong men. This was done to ensure that no one would disturb the remains.

iii. Joh_19:42 specifically tells us that the tomb of Joseph of Arimethea that Jesus was laid in was close to the place of Jesus' crucifixion (and the each of the two suggested places for Jesus' death and resurrection bear this out).

Joseph probably didn't like it that the value of his family tomb decreased because the Romans decided to crucify people nearby - yet it reminds us that in God's plan, the cross and the power of the resurrection are always permanently and closely connected.

b. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus: Once the women saw the stone rolled away and the tomb empty, their immediate reaction is that they were *greatly perplexed* (Luk_24:4). They did not expect to find an empty tomb. This shows that the resurrection accounts cannot be the product of wishful thinking; they were not even *expecting* that it could happen.

i. Mat_27:65-66 reminds us that there was a guard set round the tomb. The stone could not have been rolled away by the women (they were not strong enough) or by the disciples (even if they were brave enough, they could not overcome the armed guards). No one else would have wanted to roll away the stone, and Mat_28:2 tells us that it was an angel who rolled it away.

ii. The stone was not rolled away to let Jesus out. Joh_20:19 tells us that Jesus, in His resurrection body, could pass through material barriers. It was rolled away so that others could see in and be persuaded that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

2. (Luk_24:4-8) The angelic announcement of the resurrection.

And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. Then, as they were afraid and bowed *their* faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'" And they remembered His words.

a. **Two men stood by them in shining garments:** Even as angels announced the birth of Jesus, (Luk_2:8-15) so they also announced the resurrection of Jesus. The announcement of His birth was made to a few humble people, considered unimportant by the culture; His resurrection announced by angels to a few women.

b. **Why do you seek the living among the dead?** This was a wonderfully logical question. The angels seemed almost surprised that the women were surprised; after all, the angels had heard what Jesus said regarding His resurrection, and they knew the women had heard it also. They naturally wondered why the women were surprised.

i. At the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem - the place Emperor Constantine's mother Helena decided was the place of the true cross and the true empty tomb - there is the powerful sense of dead religion and traditionalism. Yet for hundreds and hundreds of years people have flocked to this place reeking of this kind of spiritual deadness in a desperate attempt to find God's kind of life.

ii. We too often look for Jesus in the dead things - religious traditionalism, formalism, man's rules, human effort, substitutes of the flesh. We will never ultimately find Jesus in those things - we find Him only where there is resurrection life, when we worship Him in spirit and in truth.

c. **He is not here:** These are some of the most beautiful and important words ever spoken by an angel to men. One may look all over Jerusalem and see countless thousands of tombs, but one will never find the tomb of Jesus - because **He is not here.**

i. One may see many graves and tombs in Israel today. There is an ocean of tombs on the Mount of Olives, and vast sea of graves outside the eastern wall of the temple mount. You can see the tomb of Rebekka, the tomb of David, the tomb of Absalom - but you won't find the tomb of Jesus anywhere. As the angel said, **He is not here.**

ii. Every so often someone claims to have found evidence of the tomb of Jesus or the bones of Jesus. Each claim is found to be untrue, while the testimony of the angels is proven true over and over again: **He is not here.**

d. **The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again:** To the women, it must have seemed like a long time ago that Jesus said these words. Nevertheless, they needed to remember them and the angels remind them of what Jesus said.

i. **Must** is the critical word here; just as much as the crucifixion of Jesus was necessary and ordained, so was His resurrection. Jesus would have never come to the place of Calvary unless there was also an empty tomb of resurrection there also.

e. **And they remembered His words:** The first notes of hope are sounded in the hearts of the women when they are reminded of Jesus' words. The empty tomb, the presence of angels, the words of the angels in and of themselves could

not change their hearts - but **His words** could change and cheer their hearts.

3. (Luk_24:9-11) The women tell the apostles and are not believed.

Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary *the mother* of James, and the other *women* with them, who told these things to the apostles. And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.

a. **Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest:** The women who had seen the evidence of the resurrected Jesus and remembered His words, are excited about what seemed to them to be the most wonderful news possible - that Jesus *was* alive and had triumphed over death.

i. They would not be excited like this if Jesus had only somehow miraculously survived the ordeal of the cross.

These women knew that He had not survived; their own hands provided the hasty preparation of Jesus' body on the day He was crucified. They knew beyond all doubt that He had been dead; so the news that He was alive meant so much more to them than perhaps saying Jesus was a *survivor*; it meant He was the conqueror over death and that He was everything they had hoped for and more.

b. **Their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them:** Despite their excitement, their testimony was not believed. In fact, to the apostles, it seemed as if the women told **idle tales**, a medical word used to describe the babbling of a fevered and insane man.

4. (Luk_24:12) The apostles come to believe.

But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

a. **But Peter arose and ran to the tomb:** We know from Joh_20:3-8 that both Peter and John ran to the tomb

together. They saw grave clothes, but not as if they had been ripped off after a struggle. They saw the grave clothes of Jesus lying in perfect order, as if a body had just passed out of them (Joh_20:6-7). When John saw that, he believed, and Peter marveled. They had not seen the risen Jesus, but they knew that something *powerful* had happened to cause a body to leave behind those grave clothes in such a manner.

b. Marveling to himself at what had happened: When Peter and John observed what was in the tomb, they believed.

This tells us that Peter analyzed the situation; he knew something spectacular had happened because of the condition of the grave clothes, but he because he had forgotten the words of Jesus (Joh_20:9), he did not yet understand.

i. You can know that Jesus rose from the dead, but unless you know His words, it won't make sense. Unless you know the life and teachings of Jesus, you don't know that the resurrection means that the payment that Jesus offered on the cross was perfect and complete. You don't know that the cross was the payment and the empty tomb is the receipt. You don't know that death has no hold on redeemed man. You don't know that when God's love and man's hate battled at the cross, God's love won. You don't know that because Jesus was raised from the dead, we can be resurrected in Him.

c. What had happened: Because Jesus rose from the dead, we know that God no longer lives in a temple made with hands. In Jerusalem, one may see what remains of the magnificently spectacular temple that stood in Jesus' day. These stones were 40 feet long, 18 feet high (too heavy to be lifted with modern cranes), finished with finely carved frames and fitted so perfectly they required no mortar; and these are the *retaining wall*! But from the time Jesus died

and rose again, that temple became just another building, because it was no longer the dwelling place of God.

B. On the road to Emmaus.

1. (Luk_24:13-16) Jesus joins two disciples on a road.

Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

a. **Two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus:** On this Sunday, these two disciples traveled to Emmaus from Jerusalem. As they walked together it gave them a great opportunity to talk.

b. **They conversed and reasoned:** As they talked, they spoke of the things that were biggest on their hearts - **all of these things which had happened**, the things regarding the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus.

c. **Jesus Himself drew near and went with them:** Jesus came along side these disciples, and **went with them** for a while. Yet for a time they were miraculously prevented from seeing who Jesus was.

2. (Luk_24:17-24) The disciples explain what they talked about.

And He said to them, "What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.

Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.”

a. **What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?** Jesus opened the conversation by asking them what they had been talking about. From this, we can know that Jesus had walked silently with them for a while, just listening as they carried on the conversation.

i. It was evident in their countenance - and perhaps even in their manner of walking - that they were **sad**. Jesus knew both what they already knew (that they were sad) and what they did not yet know (that they had no reason to be sad).

b. **Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened here in these days?** Jesus probably smiled when they said this. He knew pretty well what had **happened here in these days**.

c. **What things?** In saying this, Jesus skillfully played along with the conversation, encouraging the men to reveal their hearts. Jesus longs for us to tell Him our hearts, even though He already knows. There is great value for us in *saying* it to Him.

d. **The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth:** The men explained what they did know about Jesus.

- They knew His name and where He was from.
- They knew He was a **Prophet**.
- They knew He was **mighty in deed and word**.
- They knew He was **crucified**.
- They knew He promised to **redeem Israel**.
- They knew others had said He rose from the dead.

e. **We were hoping:** These disciples had a hope they felt was disappointed. Their hope was *really not* disappointed;

but in some ways their hope was misguided (**that it was He who was going to redeem Israel**). But really, their hope was fulfilled in a greater way than they could have ever dreamed.

f. **Just as the women had said:** The only thing these disciples had to go on was the testimony of others, but they were slow to believe. The report of the women meant little to them, and the report of Peter and John who had seen the grave clothes meant little - because **Him they did not see**.

i. Jesus wanted to know from them what He wants to know from us today: can we believe without seeing with our own eyes? Can we believe based on the reliable eyewitness testimony of other people?

3. (Luk_24:25-27) Jesus teaches them why the Messiah *had* to suffer.

Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

a. **Slow of heart to believe:** Jesus told them that the problem with their belief was more in their **heart** than their *head*.

We often think the main obstacles to belief are in the head, but they are actually in the **heart**.

b. **Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?** They should have believed what **all the prophets have spoken**, that the Messiah would suffer first and then be received in glory.

i. The prophets spoke in Isa_53:3-5 : *He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded*

for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

ii. Isa_50:5-7 is another example of what the prophets taught concerning this. *The Lord GOD has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away. I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. For the Lord GOD will help Me; therefore I will not be disgraced; therefore I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed.*

iii. Dan_9:26 shows another prophet regarding these things: *The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself.*

iv. Zec_12:10 is yet another example: *They will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

c. And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself: Jesus began to teach them what was surely one of the most spectacular Bible studies ever taught. **Beginning in Moses and all the Prophets,** He told them all about the Messiah.

i. He told them that the Messiah was:

- The Seed of the Woman, whose heel was bruised.
- The blessing of Abraham to all nations.
- The High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.
- The Man who wrestled with Jacob.
- The Lion of the Tribe of Judah.
- The voice from the burning bush.
- The Passover Lamb.
- The Prophet greater than Moses.
- The captain of the Lord's army to Joshua.
- The ultimate Kinsman-Redeemer mentioned in Ruth.
- The son of David who was a King greater than David.
- The suffering Savior of Psalms 22.

- The Good Shepherd of Psalms 23.
- The wisdom of Proverbs and the Lover of the Song of Solomon.
- The Savior described in the prophets and the suffering Servant of Isaiah 53.
- The Princely Messiah of Daniel who would establish a kingdom that would never end.

ii. These men must have been amazed at Jesus' ability to teach and understand the Scriptures - even though they did not know who He was yet!

d. **Expounded to them in all the Scriptures:** This describes *how* Jesus taught them. The idea of expounding is to simply let the text speak for itself; exactly what a Bible teacher should do his or her best to do.

i. The ancient Greek word for **expounded** (*di hermeneuo*) has the idea of sticking close to the text. In another passage when Luke uses this word, it is expressed with the word *translated* (Act_9:36). Jesus didn't go off on speculative ideas. He **expounded**, which means He stuck close to the text.

4. (Luk_24:28-32) Jesus is revealed to the disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

a. **He indicated that He would have gone farther:** Jesus acted as if He might continue on farther, but did not want to force His company on these disciples. **But they**

constrained Him shows that even though they didn't know this was Jesus in their midst, they knew they wanted to spend as much time as they could with this man.

b. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him:

What was it that showed them it was Jesus? It could have been the familiar way that He **broke** the bread and **blessed** God for it. Perhaps it was only then that they noticed His nail-scarred wrists. Whatever the outward reason, it was only because their eyes were no longer *restrained* as they were before (Luk_24:16).

i. Jesus can be right in front of you, walking with you and sitting down with you at every meal - and your eyes can be restrained from seeing Him. We therefore should pray that God would open our eyes to see Jesus as He is, as being with us all the time.

c. He vanished from their sight: As soon as their eyes were opened to who Jesus was, He left miraculously and they both said what was on their hearts. Their hearts burned as they heard Him speak and teach.

i. Did not our heart burn within us while He talked:

God's word can have this same effect on our heart, even when we don't know that it is Jesus doing that work.

ii. Even when they didn't know it was Jesus, even when they didn't believe He was risen from the dead, their heart still burned because of the ministry of God's Word and of Jesus, the Living Word of God. God's Word has that power, but man's word and wisdom does not.

iii. Neither of them knew the other's heart burned until Jesus left. After that, they could have a fellowship of flaming hearts together. One reason Jesus left was so that they would love one another, and minister to one another.

5. (Luk_24:33-35) They tell the good news.

So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" And they told about the things *that*

had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

a. **So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem:** After a seven mile walk one way, they were so excited that they went seven miles back - and probably much faster on the return. They had the passion to tell the great news of Jesus' resurrection.

b. **The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon:** They had mutual confirmation of the resurrection of Jesus. Though the risen Jesus was not physically in their midst, His resurrection had been confirmed by more than two witnesses.

C. Jesus teaches His disciples and ascends into heaven.

1. (Luk_24:36-43) Jesus appears to the eleven.

Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took *it* and ate in their presence.

a. **Peace to you:** These were words with new meaning, now that Jesus had risen from the dead. Now, true peace could come between God and man and among men.

b. **Handle Me and see:** Jesus wanted to assure them that His resurrection body was a real, physical body, though of a different order than our own bodies. He wasn't some ghost or phantom.

i. As a demonstration of this, He ate in their presence. In most of Jesus' resurrection appearances, He eats with the disciples.

c. **They still did not believe for joy, and marveled:** The disciples were completely convinced that Jesus rose from the dead, but they had a hard time accepting it because it seemed too good to be true. But it was their confirmed belief in the resurrected Jesus that give them power enough to change the world and courage enough to die for their convictions.

2. (Luk_24:44-48) Jesus teaches His disciples.

Then He said to them, “These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.” And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.”

a. **These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you:** Jesus *almost* says “I told you so” by reminding them that all this has happened just as He said it would. To help His disciples take it all in, **He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.**

i. It must have been before this that the disciples were actually born again by God’s Spirit, when Jesus breathed on them and they received the Holy Spirit (Joh_20:22).

b. **It was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day:** Jesus wanted them to understand that the cross was not some unfortunate obstacle that had to be hurdled. It was a **necessary** part of God’s redemptive plan for man, and that it would be in the name of a crucified and risen Savior that **repentance and remission of sins** will be brought to the world.

c. **You are witnesses of these things:** Jesus solemnly told them that they were **witnesses of these things**. Not

only **witnesses** of the events surrounding the work of Jesus, but also of the commission itself to spread the gospel. This was a work they were all mutually responsible for.

3. (Luk_24:49-53) The Ascension of Jesus.

“Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

a. **I send the Promise of My Father upon you:** They could not do the work Jesus had called them to do unless they were **endued with power from on high**, and that power would come as the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them.

b. **He lifted up His hands and blessed them . . . while He blessed them:** Jesus left the earth blessing His Church, and He continues to bless them, as much as His people will receive.

i. Nothing but blessing had ever come from those hands; but now, Jesus stands as the High Priest over His people to bless them.

ii. When Jesus blesses His people, it isn't just a pious wish like “I hope things work out for you” or “I hope you will be feeling better.” Instead, the blessing of Jesus has inherent *power* within it.

iii. “If he has blessed you, you *shall* be blessed, for there is no power in heaven, or earth, or hell, that can reverse the blessing which He gives.” (Spurgeon)

iv. When we think about those hands raised up in blessing, we can see the scars from the nails that were pounded through Jesus' flesh and that kept Him bound to the cross. We can see that these hands of pain should also be hands of blessing.

v. Those nail-scarred hands show the price of your blessing; it is a price you cannot pay, but Jesus already has.

What then keeps you from being blessed? All you must do is come to this Jesus and receive that blessing in trusting faith.

d. **He was parted from them and carried up into heaven:** Jesus had to ascend so that confidence would be put in the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit, not in the geographical presence of Jesus.

i. Act_1:3 tells us that this ascension into heaven happened 40 days after Jesus' resurrection. He spent those 40 days proving the truth of His resurrection and preparing His disciples for His departure.

ii. "Those forty days were soon over. Very remarkable days they were, if you study them; so different from his former life. Nobody molested the Lord; no scribes or Pharisees contradicted him, no malicious Jews took up stones to stone him. . . . I might almost say that those days were the prelude of his glory, a sort of anticipation of his reign of peace, when he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth, and wars shall cease unto the end of the earth. When those forty days were over, the Master went his way. All was done that he had covenanted to perform, and he ascended to his reward." (Spurgeon, *Our Ascended Lord*)

e. **And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God:** This shows the wonderful result of the ministry of Jesus in the disciples' lives.

- **They worshipped Him:** This means they knew that Jesus was God, and they gave Him the honor He deserves.

- They **returned to Jerusalem:** This means they did just what Jesus told them to do. They were obedient.

- **With great joy:** This means they *really believed* Jesus rose from the dead, and let the joy of that fact touch everything in their life.

• **Continually in the temple praising and blessing**

God: This means that they lived as *public* followers of Jesus, and could not hide their love and worship towards Him.

i. When God does this kind of work in His people, we say "**Amen.**"

(Luk 24:2) They⁴ found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb,⁵

(Luk 24:3) but when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.⁶

(Luk 24:4) While⁷ they were perplexed⁸ about this, suddenly⁹ two men stood beside them in dazzling¹⁰ attire.

(Luk 24:5) The¹¹ women¹² were terribly frightened¹³ and bowed¹⁴ their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living¹⁵ among the dead?

(Luk 24:6) He is not here, but has been raised!¹⁶ Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee,¹⁷

(Luk 24:7) that¹⁸ the Son of Man must be delivered¹⁹ into the hands of sinful men,²⁰ and be crucified,²¹ and on the third day rise again."²²

(Luk 24:8) Then²³ the women remembered his words,²⁴

(Luk 24:9) and when they returned from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven²⁵ and to all the rest.

(Luk 24:10) Now it was Mary Magdalene,²⁶ Joanna,²⁷ Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles.

(Luk 24:11) But these words seemed like pure nonsense²⁸ to them, and they did not believe them.

(Luk 24:12) But Peter got up and ran to the tomb.²⁹ He bent down³⁰ and saw only the strips of linen cloth;³¹ then he went home,³²

wondering³³ what had happened.³⁴

(Luk 24:13) ***Jesus Walks the Road to Emmaus***

Now³⁵ that very day two of them³⁶ were on their way to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles³⁷ from Jerusalem.³⁸

(Luk 24:14) They³⁹ were talking to each other about all the things that had happened.

(Luk 24:15) While⁴⁰ they were talking and debating⁴¹ these things,⁴² Jesus himself approached and began to accompany them (Luk 24:16) (but their eyes were kept⁴³ from recognizing⁴⁴ him).⁴⁵

(Luk 24:17) Then⁴⁶ he said to them, "What are these matters⁴⁷ you are discussing so intently⁴⁸ as you walk along?" And they stood still, looking sad.

(Luk 24:18) Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him,⁴⁹ "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who doesn't know⁵⁰ the things that have happened there⁵¹ in these days?"

(Luk 24:19) He⁵² said to them, "What things?" "The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene," they replied, "a man⁵³ who, with his powerful deeds and words, proved to be a prophet⁵⁴ before God and all the people; (Luk 24:20) and how our chief priests and rulers handed him over⁵⁵ to be condemned to death, and crucified⁵⁶ him.

(Luk 24:21) But we had hoped⁵⁷ that he was the one who was going to redeem⁵⁸ Israel. Not only this, but it is now the third day since these things happened.

(Luk 24:22) Furthermore, some women of our group amazed us.⁵⁹ They⁶⁰ were at the tomb early this morning, (Luk 24:23) and when they did not find his body, they came back and said they had seen a vision of angels,⁶¹ who said he was alive.

(Luk 24:24) Then⁶² some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him."⁶³

(Luk 24:25) So⁶⁴ he said to them, "You⁶⁵ foolish people⁶⁶ — how slow of heart⁶⁷ to believe⁶⁸ all that the prophets have spoken!

(Luk 24:26) Wasn't⁶⁹ it necessary⁷⁰ for the Christ⁷¹ to suffer these things and enter into his glory?"

(Luk 24:27) Then⁷² beginning with Moses and all the prophets,⁷³ he interpreted to them the things written about⁷⁴ himself in all the scriptures.

(Luk 24:28) So they approached the village where they were going. He acted as though he wanted to go farther,⁷⁵

(Luk 24:29) but they urged him,⁷⁶ "Stay with us, because it is getting toward evening and the day is almost done." So⁷⁷ he went in to stay with them.

(Luk 24:30) When⁷⁸ he had taken his place at the table⁷⁹ with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it,⁸⁰ and gave it to them.

(Luk 24:31) At this point⁸¹ their eyes were opened and they recognized⁸² him.⁸³ Then⁸⁴ he vanished out of their sight.

(Luk 24:32) They⁸⁵ said to each other, "Didn't⁸⁶ our hearts⁸⁷ burn within us⁸⁸ while he was speaking with us on the road, while he was explaining⁸⁹ the scriptures to us?"

(Luk 24:33) So⁹⁰ they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem.⁹¹ They⁹² found the eleven and those with them gathered together

(Luk 24:34) and⁹³ saying, "The Lord has really risen, and has appeared to Simon!"⁹⁴

(Luk 24:35) Then they told what had happened on the road,⁹⁵ and how they recognized him⁹⁶ when he broke the bread.

(Luk 24:36) ***Jesus Makes a Final Appearance***

While they were saying these things, Jesus⁹⁷ himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."⁹⁸

(Luk 24:37) But they were startled and terrified, thinking⁹⁹ they saw a ghost.¹⁰⁰

(Luk 24:38) Then¹⁰¹ he said to them, "Why are you frightened,¹⁰² and why do doubts¹⁰³ arise in your hearts?"

(Luk 24:39) Look at my hands and my feet; it's me!¹⁰⁴ Touch me and see; a ghost¹⁰⁵ does not have flesh and bones like you see I have."

(Luk 24:40) When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.¹⁰⁶

(Luk 24:41) And while they still could not believe it¹⁰⁷ (because of their joy) and were amazed,¹⁰⁸ he said to them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"¹⁰⁹

(Luk 24:42) So¹¹⁰ they gave him a piece of broiled fish,

(Luk 24:43) and he took it and ate it in front of them.

(Luk 24:44) ***Jesus' Final Commission***

Then¹¹¹ he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me¹¹² in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms¹¹³ must be fulfilled."

(Luk 24:45) Then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures,¹¹⁴

(Luk 24:46) and said to them, "Thus it stands written that the Christ¹¹⁵ would suffer¹¹⁶ and would rise from the dead on the third day, (Luk 24:47) and repentance¹¹⁷ for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed¹¹⁸ in his name to all nations,¹¹⁹ beginning from Jerusalem.¹²⁰

(Luk 24:48) You are witnesses¹²¹ of these things.

(Luk 24:49) And look, I am sending you¹²² what my Father promised.¹²³ But stay in the city¹²⁴ until you have been clothed with power¹²⁵ from on high."

(Luk 24:50) ***Jesus' Departure***

Then¹²⁶ Jesus¹²⁷ led them out as far as Bethany,¹²⁸ and lifting up his hands, he blessed them.

(Luk 24:51) Now¹²⁹ during the blessing¹³⁰ he departed¹³¹ and was taken up into heaven.¹³²

(Luk 24:52) So¹³³ they worshiped¹³⁴ him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,¹³⁵

(Luk 24:53) and were continually in the temple courts¹³⁶ blessing¹³⁷ God.¹³⁸